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PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES

PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF THE
UNITED STATES

Barack Obama

2011

(IN TWO BOOKS)

BOOK I—JANUARY 1 TO JUNE 30, 2011

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Foreword

As we continued to grow our economy and put more Americans back to work, 2011 brought new opportunities and unexpected challenges for the United States. Here at home, we worked to reduce our debt and rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. And when a Tunisian street vendor's act of desperation sparked a revolution across the Middle East and North Africa, it marked a new chapter in American diplomacy.

The transformation that took place during the Arab Spring captivated the world, and the United States supported the forces of change. In Tunis, Sana'a, and Cairo, thousands of people took to the streets, proving that freedom and self-determination are not unique to one culture—they are universal values. In the months that followed, we stood with those who sought a government of, by, and for the people. And in Libya, where the fight for freedom was answered with the threat of a massacre, we joined an international coalition to protect the lives and aspirations of the Libyan people.

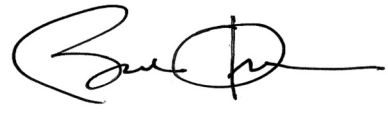
While the Arab Spring represented a new beginning for millions around the world, 2011 was also an opportunity for America to begin to bring two costly wars to a responsible end. Nearly 10 years after the tragic events of September 11, our men and women in uniform continued to deal crippling blows to al Qaeda's leadership, culminating in the death of Osama bin Laden. It was the most significant victory in our efforts to root out terrorism and bring those responsible for killing Americans to justice. And while no act could ever fully heal the wounds of that terrible day, it also delivered a measure of solace to the families who lost loved ones in the attacks.

In Afghanistan, we continued to break the Taliban's momentum and transition responsibility for security to Afghan lead. With the Iraqi government also now in charge of its own security, we brought even more of our troops home, and we worked to keep faith with the men and women who sacrificed so much for our country. This effort was led by First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, who launched the Joining Forces initiative to make sure our troops, our veterans, and their families get the care and support they have earned.

We also invested in our Nation's path to long-term prosperity: a strong and growing middle class. I established the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness and the White House Rural Council to accelerate our recovery and help more Americans find good-paying jobs. I called on Democrats and Republicans in the Congress to come together and fix our broken immigration system—a step that would boost our economy and bring us closer to the principles of equality and opportunity that have always been central to who we are as Americans. I directed my Administration to cut waste and get rid of unnecessary regulations that were holding us back. And throughout the spring, we fought hard for a balanced approach to reducing our deficit.

The first half of 2011 was also marked by tragedy. Our hearts were broken when a gunman opened fire in Tucson, Arizona, taking the lives of 6 Americans and wounding 13 more, including Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. And severe storms damaged communities from Joplin, Missouri, to Tuscaloosa, Alabama. But even as we mourned those we lost, we also found inspiration in the men and women who reached out to one another; who made incredible sacrifices for their communities; and who showed us the true meaning of courage and resilience. It was that same spirit that moved countless Americans to offer relief when a tsunami struck Japan's Pacific coast.

Our Nation continues to move forward with confidence and determination. And whatever challenges may come, I believe we can meet them together—as one Nation and one people.



Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period January 1–June 30, 2011. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against an audio recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless otherwise indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed in full text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. On January 20, 2009, the printed Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents was superseded by the online Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents. The Daily Compilation provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of the Press Secretary. In 2012, the Government Printing Office and the Office of the Federal Register released a mobile web application (http://m.gpo.gov/dcpd) that catalogues the daily public activities of the President of the United States and enhances features of the online Daily Compilation with user-friendly search capability, allowing users to access Presidential content by date, category, subject, or location.

Also included in the printed edition are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not printed in full text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Herbert Hoover, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of John Hyrum Martinez, Director of the Publications and Services Division, Office of the Federal Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit. The Chief Editor of this book was Laurice A. Clark, assisted by Lead Editors Joshua H. Liberatore, Amelia E. Otovo, and Joseph K. Vetter and unit editors Lois

M. Davis, Michael J. Forcina, Joseph G. Frankovic, Martin V. Franks, Stacey A. Mulligan, and Matthew R. Regan.

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Charles A. Barth
Director of the Federal Register

David S. Ferriero
Archivist of the United States

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Secretary of Defense	Robert M. Gates
Attorney General	Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Secretary of the Interior	Kenneth L. Salazar
Secretary of Agriculture	Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Commerce	Gary F. Locke
Secretary of Labor	Hilda L. Solis
Secretary of Health and Human Services	Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Shaun L.S. Donovan
Secretary of Transportation	Raymond H. LaHood
Secretary of Energy	Steven Chu
Secretary of Education	Arne Duncan
Secretary of Veterans Affairs	Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Homeland Security	Janet A. Napolitano
Chief of Staff	Peter M. Rouse (resigned January 12) William M. Daley (appointed January 12)
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency	Lisa P. Jackson
United States Trade Representative	Ronald Kirk

Director of the Office of Management and Budget	Jacob J. "Jack" Lew
Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers	Austan D. Goolsbee
United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations	Susan E. Rice

Administration of Barack Obama

2011

The President's Weekly Address
January 1, 2011

Hello, everybody. As we close the books on one year and begin another, I wanted to take a moment today to wish you a very happy New Year and to talk a little bit about the year that lies ahead.

At the start of 2011, we're still just emerging from a once-in-a-lifetime recession that's taken a terrible toll on millions of families. We all have friends and neighbors trying to get their lives back on track.

We are, however, riding a few months of economic news that suggests our recovery is gaining traction. And our most important task now is to keep that recovery going. As President, that's my commitment to you: to do everything I can to make sure our economy is growing, creating jobs, and strengthening our middle class. That's my resolution for the coming year.

Still, even as we work to boost our economy in the short term, it's time to make some serious decisions about how to keep our economy strong, growing, and competitive in the long run. We have to look ahead, not just to this year, but to the next 10 years and the next 20 years. Where will new innovations come from? How will we attract the companies of tomorrow to set up shop and create jobs in our communities? What will it take to get those jobs? What will it take to outcompete other countries around the world? What will it take to see the American Dream come true for our children and grandchildren?

Our parents and grandparents asked themselves those questions. And because they had the courage to answer them, we've had the good fortune to grow up in the greatest nation on Earth.

Now it's our turn to think about the future. In a few days, a new Congress will form, with one House controlled by Democrats and one House controlled by Republicans, who now have a shared responsibility to move this country forward. And here's what I want you to know: I'm willing to work with anyone of either party who's got a good idea and the commitment to see it through. And we should all expect you to hold us accountable for our progress or our failure to deliver.

As I've said since I first ran for this office, solving our challenges won't be quick or easy. We've come through a difficult decade, one of new threats and new trials we didn't expect when it began. But a new year and a new decade stretches out before us. And if we just remember what America is capable of and live up to that legacy, then I'm confident that we are poised for a period of progress, one in which our economy is growing, our standing in the world is rising, and we do what it takes to make sure America remains in the 21st century what it was in the 20th: the greatest country in the world.

Thanks for listening, and happy New Year.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:45 p.m. on December 20, 2010, in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on January 1, 2011. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 31, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 1.

Statement on Terrorist Attacks in Egypt and Nigeria
January 1, 2011

I strongly condemn the separate and outrageous terrorist bombing attacks in Egypt and Nigeria. The attack on a church in Alexandria, Egypt, caused 21 reported deaths and dozens of injured from both the Christian and Muslim communities. The perpetrators of this attack were clearly targeting Christian worshipers and have no respect for human life and dignity.

They must be brought to justice for this barbaric and heinous act. We are continuing to gather information regarding this terrible event and are prepared to offer any necessary assistance to the Government of Egypt in responding to it.

The attack near an army barracks in Abuja also reportedly killed more than 20 people and wounded many more. Killing innocent civilians who were simply gathering, like so many people around the world, to celebrate the beginning of a new year further demonstrates the bankrupt vision of those who carry out these attacks, and we are similarly prepared to offer assistance to the Government of Nigeria as it works to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The United States extends its deepest condolences to the families of those killed and to the wounded in both of these attacks, and we stand with the Nigerian and Egyptian people at this difficult time.

Statement on Signing the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010

January 2, 2011

I was honored to sign the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act to ensure that rescue and recovery workers, residents, students, and others suffering from health consequences related to the World Trade Center disaster have access to the medical monitoring and treatment they need. We will never forget the selfless courage demonstrated by the firefighters, police officers, and first-responders who risked their lives to save others. I believe this is a critical step for those who continue to bear the physical scars of those attacks.

NOTE: H.R. 847, approved January 2, was assigned Public Law No. 111–347.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One

January 3, 2011

President's Visit to Hawaii

The President. Did you guys have a little bit of fun?

Q. Happy New Year.

The President. Happy New Year. I hope you guys had a little fun. At least one guy had the right wardrobe.

Q. Did you have beans in your shaved ice? I ask this every year.

The President. No, I did not. I'm a plain shaved ice guy. No beans, no ice cream, no sweet milk on top.

Q. What were the flavors today?

The President. I went for the melon and cherry. I was——

Q. Consistent.

The President. I was consistent.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit

Q. Could the Democratic Convention be out here? Have you considered bringing it out here? [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, we've got the APEC convention, so we'll be back in November. That will be a big event. So everybody is very excited about that. The mayor and Governor and all those folks are excited.

Congress/Bipartisanship

Q. A serious question: Are you concerned you're going to get a chilly reception in Washington? Republicans, on Sunday, were talking about the first thing they're going to do is repeal health care. They're talking about asking you to get rid of Eric Holder, the Attorney

General. It sounds like a relatively chilly reception awaiting you.

The President. Well, I mean, I think that there's going to be politics. That's what happens in Washington. They are going to play to their base for a certain period of time. But I'm pretty confident that they're going to recognize that our job is to govern and make sure that we are delivering jobs for the American people and that we're creating a competitive economy for the 21st century, not just for this generation, but the next one.

And so my expectation, my hope is that John Boehner and Mitch McConnell will realize that there will be plenty of time to campaign for 2012 in 2012 and that our job this year is to make sure that we build on the recovery. We started to make good progress on that during the lame duck, and I expect to build on that progress when I get back.

All right?

Q. What do you think about their effort to repeal health care?

Q. Anything on Larry Summers's replacement?

The President. Thank you, guys. Happy New Year.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 p.m. while en route to Joint Base Andrews, MD. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Peter B. Carlisle of Honolulu, HI; and Gov. Neil Abercrombie of Hawaii. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 4. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Resignation of Robert L. Gibbs as White House Press Secretary
January 5, 2011

For the last 6 years, Robert has been a close friend, one of my closest advisers, and an effective advocate from the podium for what this administration has been doing to move America forward. I think it's natural for him to want to step back, reflect, and retool. That brings up some challenges and opportunities for the White House, but it doesn't change the important role that Robert will continue to play on our team.

Message to the Congress on 2010 Census Redistricting
January 5, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to title 2, United States Code, section 2a(a), I transmit herewith the statement showing the apportionment population for each State as of April 1, 2010, and the number of Representatives to which each State would be entitled.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
January 5, 2011.

Remarks on the Appointment of William M. Daley as White House Chief of Staff
January 6, 2011

Please have a seat, everybody. Happy New Year. Last October, when my former Chief of Staff, Rahm Emanuel, departed to pursue other opportunities in Chicago, I asked Pete Rouse, one of my most trusted aides, to step into the breach and lead us through a very

difficult time. And I also asked Pete to help us think about how the White House should be structured and run over the next 2 years.

Thanks in no small part to his efforts, a period that everybody thought would be one of retrenchment turned out to be one of great progress for our country. And Pete's leadership is all the more remarkable when you consider that when I first met him and asked him to lead my Senate staff, he told me in that gruff voice of his that his "strong inclination was to leave government." After—[*laughter*]—the reason everybody is applauding is because they've heard him say that every day—[*laughter*]—they've heard him say that every day for the last 6 years. And yet each time I've asked him to accept one more assignment, he's saddled up and he's taken the job. And it's fair to say that I would not be where I am today without his extraordinary counsel.

Now, Pete didn't volunteer to serve as Interim Chief of Staff. He made it clear that that was not his preference. But he accepted the responsibility, and as he oversaw our strategy during the lame duck session of Congress, he also was working to develop a structure and a plan for the next 2 years that I believe will serve the White House and, more importantly, the American people very well. One of those assignments was providing me recommendations for candidates to serve as Chief of Staff moving forward.

As part of that process, today I am proud to announce the appointment of an experienced public servant, a devoted patriot, my friend, fellow Chicagoan Bill Daley, to serve as my Chief of Staff.

Few Americans can boast the breadth of experience that Bill brings to this job. He served as a member of President Clinton's Cabinet as Commerce Secretary. He took on several other important duties over the years on behalf of our country. He's led major corporations. He possesses a deep understanding of how jobs are created and how to grow our economy. And needless to say, Bill also has a smidgen of awareness of how our system of government and politics works. You might say it is a genetic trait. [*Laughter*]

But most of all, I know Bill to be somebody who cares deeply about this country, believes in its promise, and considers no calling higher and more important than serving the American people. He will bring his tremendous experience, his strong values, and forward-looking vision to this White House. I'm convinced that he'll help us in our mission of growing our economy and moving America forward. And I very much look forward to working with Bill in the years to come.

Before I ask Bill to say a few words, I should also confess that I have prevailed once again on Pete's sense of duty—or sense of guilt, I'm not sure which—and I'm grateful that he has agreed to one more tour of duty as my counselor for the next 2 years. He is—[*applause*]—as you might have noticed, people like Pete. [*Laughter*] He is a unique and indispensable asset to me and to this administration. I cannot imagine life here without him, and I told him so. And I'm delighted that we're able to keep him a little bit longer.

I'll be making further announcements in the days and weeks ahead, and I am absolutely confident that we will have a great team that's equal to America's task in the years to come. But with that, what I'd like to do is to introduce my new Chief of Staff, Bill Daley.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:29 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chief of Staff Daley.

Remarks at Thompson Creek Window Company in Landover, Maryland
January 7, 2011

Please, everybody have a seat. It is wonderful to be with all of you today. I want to make just a couple of quick acknowledgments. First of all, we have one of the fine Senators from the great State of Maryland, Ben Cardin, in the house. Where's Ben? There he is right here.

Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker is here.

I want to thank Rick Wuest, the CEO and owner of Thompson Creek manufacturing, and all the employees here at Thompson. Thank you so much for your hospitality and the great work that you're doing. And I want to acknowledge the family and guests of those who are standing behind me today.

It is wonderful to be here at Thompson Creek, and I want to thank Rick for showing me how you manufacture more efficient windows at this factory. This is, as he explained to me, a family business. Rick was just 13 when his father Fred opened the company. And back then, his family lived above the store, and Rick started out sweeping the floors. Three decades later, Thompson Creek has expanded. It's already outgrown this new 80,000-square-foot facility that it moved into just 3 years ago. And I'll bet sometimes Rick still feels like he's living at the plant. [*Laughter*] That's what happens when you're in charge.

But building this business has been an extraordinary accomplishment for the Wuest family. And it speaks not only to him, it also speaks to all the employees here today, the hard-working men and women who make this company work. And it speaks to the promise of America. It's the idea that if you've got a dream and you're willing to work hard, then you can succeed.

That promise is at the heart of who we are as a people, and it's at the heart of our economic might. It's what helps give an entrepreneur the courage to start a business or a company the confidence to expand. It's what leads to new products and new ideas and technologies that have not only made us the world's largest economy, but also the most innovative economy in the world. Making it possible for businesses to succeed is how we ensure that our economy succeeds and all our people succeed. It's how we create jobs.

And that's what's guided my administration for the past 2 years. Government can't guarantee Thompson Creek or any business will be successful, but government can knock down barriers like a lack of affordable credit or high costs for investment or high costs for hiring. We can do something about that; government can remove obstacles in your path.

And that's why we cut taxes for small businesses over the last 2 years. For example, with a tax break for hiring unemployed workers, Thompson Creek was able to grow its workforce from 200 employees to nearly 300 employees in just one year. And it took advantage of the tax credits that we put into place. We also passed a tax credit for products like energy-saving windows, and that led to a 55-percent boost in the sales at this firm.

Rick was telling me that when that tax credit got into place, the marketing arm of Thompson Creek got busy. [*Laughter*] And that's the right—that's exactly what we intended. That's exactly what we wanted to see, is explaining to the American people you can save money on your energy bill, this is a smart thing to do, take advantage of it.

So incentives like these are helping companies across America. And the jobs numbers released this morning reflect that growth. The economy added more than 100,000 jobs last month, and the unemployment rate fell sharply.

Now, we know these numbers can bounce around from month to month. But the trend is clear. We saw 12 straight months of private sector job growth. That's the first time that's been true since 2006. The economy added 1.3 million jobs last year. And each quarter was stronger than the previous quarter, which means that the pace of hiring is beginning to pick up. We're also seeing more optimistic economic forecasts for the year ahead, in part due to the package of tax cuts I signed last month, including a payroll tax cut for workers and a series of tax cuts to encourage investment and innovation and hiring.

And I fought for that package because even though our economy is recovering, we've still got a lot to do. This was a brutal recession that we went through, the worst in our lifetimes. It left a lot of destruction in its wake; more than 8 million jobs were lost. So even though we've created 1.3 million jobs and we saved a whole lot of jobs, you've still got a whole bunch of

folks who are out there looking, still struggling. We've got a big hole that we're digging ourselves out of.

And so our mission has to be to accelerate hiring and to accelerate growth. And that depends on making our economy more competitive so that we're fostering new jobs in new industries and training workers to fill them. It depends on keeping up the fight for every job and every business and every opportunity to spur growth. And so standing with me here today are men and women who will help America fulfill in this mission. Let me just introduce each of them.

We're joined, first of all, by Gene Sperling, who I have appointed Director of the National Economic Council. Give Gene a big round of applause. Now, Gene has been an extraordinary asset to me and this administration over the past 2 years. He's been working with me. He led our efforts to pass the small-business jobs bill to help companies all across America. He also helped negotiate the tax compromise that we passed at the end of this year. He's a public servant who has devoted his life to making this economy work, and making it work specifically for middle class families.

Now, one of the reasons I've selected Gene is he's done this before. This is his second tour of duty heading up the NEC, and in his tenure in the Clinton administration during the late nineties, he helped formulate the policies that contributed to turning deficits to surpluses and a time of prosperity and progress for American families in a sustained way. Few people bring the level of intelligence and sheer work ethic that Gene brings to every assignment he's ever taken. And few do so with such decency and integrity. So, Gene, we are lucky to have you back at the NEC. And I know you're going to do a terrific job.

Part of the reason I know that Gene will do a terrific job is because he's going to have Jason Furman working with him. I'm pleased to elevate Jason Furman to be Principal Deputy at the National Economic Council. Give Jason a big round of applause.

Over the past 2 years, I've relied on Jason's advice and expertise on a range of economic issues, from helping design the emergency steps we took to prevent our economy from sinking into a second depression to, most recently, working with Gene and the economic team to pass the tax cut compromise. And I'm confident that he will continue to do terrific work in this greater capacity.

We're also joined by somebody I've come to rely on as an adviser and a friend since my first days as a Presidential candidate. Heather Higginbottom is currently the Deputy Director of the Domestic Policy Council, where she's been the point person on education as we've pursued some of the most innovative and important reforms in decades. I'm proud to nominate Heather to now serve as Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

And she understands the relationship between numbers on a ledger and the lives of real people. As we make cuts that are necessary to rein in the deficit, I want to make sure I've got Heather there so that we're meeting our fundamental obligations to our people and to our economy as well. So give Heather a big round of applause. Thank you.

And finally, I'm nominating Katharine Abraham to the Council of Economic Advisers. Go ahead. [*Applause*] Katharine brings a wealth of experience as an economist, as a Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics during the Clinton administration. I am confident that she is going to provide the kind of unbiased, unvarnished advice that will help us craft the best policies to strengthen this economy in the years to come.

Now, part of our mission—part of this team's mission—in the months ahead will be to maximize the steps we've taken to spur the economy. And one of the most important is allowing businesses to immediately deduct the entire cost of certain investments like the new equipment that I was taking a look at. This is a policy I fought for over the past 2 years. We were able to pass it finally as part of the tax cut compromise. It is going to make a real difference for our economy.

So talking to Rick, I know Thompson Creek is planning to take full advantage of this tax break. And that's going to help Thompson

Creek renovate, expand, and add another hundred new employees right here. And that's worth applauding. That's good. So you've got companies like this all over the country. And the Treasury Department estimates that overall, this will accelerate $150 billion in tax cuts for 2 million businesses over the next 2 years.

So I want to urge all businesses with capital needs to take advantage of this temporary expensing provision, because we expect it to lower the average cost of investment by more than 75 percent for companies like Thompson Creek. It is a powerful new incentive for businesses. It is a great opportunity for companies to grow and add jobs. Now is the time to act.

Companies who are listening out there: If you are planning or thinking about making investments sometime in the future, make those investments now and you're going to save money. And that will help us grow the economy. It will help you grow your business.

Overall, the decline in the unemployment rate is positive news, but it only underscores the importance of us not letting up on our efforts. So I'm looking forward to working with Heather and Gene and Katharine and Jason and everybody at the White House. We have one focus, and that is making sure that we are duplicating the success of places like Thompson Creek all across the country. We want businesses to grow, we want this economy to grow, and we want to put people back to work.

And I want to promise everybody at Thompson Creek and across the country: We will not rest until we have fully recovered from this recession and we have reached that brighter day.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m.

Statement on Signing the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011

January 7, 2011

Today I have signed into law H.R. 6523, the "Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011." The Act authorizes funding for the defense of the United States and its interests abroad, for military construction, and for national security-related energy programs.

Section 1032 bars the use of funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act for fiscal year 2011 to transfer Guantanamo detainees into the United States, and section 1033 bars the use of certain funds to transfer detainees to the custody or effective control of foreign countries unless specified conditions are met. Section 1032 represents a dangerous and unprecedented challenge to critical executive branch authority to determine when and where to prosecute Guantanamo detainees, based on the facts and the circumstances of each case and our national security interests. The prosecution of terrorists in Federal court is a powerful tool in our efforts to protect the Nation and must be among the options available to us. Any attempt to deprive the executive branch of that tool undermines our Nation's counterterrorism efforts and has the potential to harm our national security.

With respect to section 1033, the restrictions on the transfer of detainees to the custody or effective control of foreign countries interfere with the authority of the executive branch to make important and consequential foreign policy and national security determinations regarding whether and under what circumstances such transfers should occur in the context of an ongoing armed conflict. We must have the ability to act swiftly and to have broad flexibility in conducting our negotiations with foreign countries. The executive branch has sought and obtained from countries that are prospective recipients of Guantanamo detainees assurances that they will take or have taken measures reasonably designed to be effective in preventing, or ensuring against, returned detainees taking action to threaten the United States or engage in terrorist activities. Consistent with existing statutes, the executive branch has kept the Congress informed about

these assurances and notified the Congress prior to transfers. Requiring the executive branch to certify to additional conditions would hinder the conduct of delicate negotiations with foreign countries and therefore the effort to conclude detainee transfers in accord with our national security.

Despite my strong objection to these provisions, which my Administration has consistently opposed, I have signed this Act because of the importance of authorizing appropriations for, among other things, our military activities in 2011. Nevertheless, my Administration will work with the Congress to seek repeal of these restrictions, will seek to mitigate their effects, and will oppose any attempt to extend or expand them in the future.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
January 7, 2011.

NOTE: H.R. 6523, approved January 7, was assigned Public Law No. 111–383.

The President's Weekly Address
January 8, 2011

Last month, our economy added more than 100,000 private sector jobs and the unemployment rate fell sharply. This follows encouraging economic news, from increased auto sales to continued expansion of our manufacturing sector.

Now, we know that these numbers can bounce around from month to month, but the trend is clear. We saw 12 straight months of private sector job growth, the first time that's been true since 2006. The economy added 1.3 million jobs last year. And each quarter was stronger than the last, which means the pace of hiring is picking up.

Now we're seeing more optimistic economic forecasts for the year ahead, in part due to the package of tax cuts I signed last month. I fought for that package because, while we are recovering, we plainly still have a lot of work to do. The recession rocked the foundations of our economy and left a lot of destruction and a lot of doubt in its wake.

So our fundamental mission must be to accelerate hiring and growth, while we do the things we know are necessary to insure America's leadership in an increasingly competitive world and build an economy that will provide opportunity to any American willing to work for it.

I'm absolutely confident we will get there. I am confident, first and foremost, because of you, because of the ingenuity of our entrepreneurs and business owners, the tenacity of our workers, and the determination of the American people. This is what has made our economy the envy of the world. But we have to do everything we can to help our businesses and workers win in this new economy.

Now, yesterday I visited the Thompson Creek Window Company, a small business in Maryland. Over the past year, sales there have grown by 55 percent, thanks in part to an energy tax credit we created. And this year, they're also planning to take advantage of a new tax incentive for businesses. For 1 year, any business large or small can write off the full cost of most of their capital investments. This will make it more affordable for businesses like Thompson Creek to expand and hire.

So, if you're a business owner, I'd encourage you to take advantage of this temporary provision. It will save you money today and help you grow your business tomorrow.

This incentive is part of the economic package I signed into law last month, a package that also includes a payroll tax cut that will mean $1,000 more this year for a typical family. In fact, 155 million workers will see larger paychecks this month as a result of this tax cut.

Twelve million families will benefit from a $1,000 child tax credit and an expanded earned-income tax credit. Eight million students and families will continue to benefit

from a $2,500 tuition tax credit to make college more affordable.

And millions of entrepreneurs in big cities and small towns across the country will benefit not only from the business expensing plan I mentioned, but from additional tax cuts that will spur research and development.

Independent experts have concluded that taken together, this package of tax cuts will significantly accelerate the pace of our economic recovery, spurring additional jobs and additional growth.

And that's our mission. That should be the focus, day in and day out, of our work in Washington in the coming months, as we wrestle with a challenging budget and long-term deficits. And I'm determined to work with everyone, Republicans and Democrats, to achieve that goal. What we can't do is refight the battles of the past 2 years that distract us from the hard work of moving our economy forward. What we can't do is engage in the kinds of symbolic battles that so often consume Washington while the rest of America waits for us to solve problems.

The tax cuts and other progress we made in December were a much-needed departure from that pattern. Let's build on that admirable example and do our part, here in Washington, so that the doers, the builders, and the innovators in America can do their best in 2011 and beyond.

Thanks everybody, and have a nice weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:15 p.m. on January 7 in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on January 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 7, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 8.

Remarks on the Shootings in Tucson, Arizona
January 8, 2011

As many of you are aware, earlier today a number of people were shot in Tucson, Arizona, including several who were meeting at a supermarket with their Congresswoman, Gabrielle Giffords. We are still assembling all the facts, but we know that Representative Giffords was one of the victims. She is currently at a hospital in the area, and she is battling for her life.

We also know that at least five people lost their lives in this tragedy. Among them were a Federal judge, John Roll, who has served America's legal system for almost 40 years, and a young girl who was barely 9 years old.

I've spoken to Arizona Governor Jan Brewer and offered the full resources of the Federal Government. A suspect is currently in custody, but we don't yet know what provoked this unspeakable act. A comprehensive investigation is currently underway, and at my direction, Director Bob Mueller is en route to Arizona to help coordinate these efforts. I've also spoken to the Democratic and Republican leaders in the House.

Gabby Giffords was a friend of mine. She is not only an extraordinary public servant, but she is also somebody who is warm and caring. She is well liked by her colleagues and well liked by her constituents. Her husband Mark Kelly is a Navy captain and one of America's valiant astronauts.

It's not surprising that today Gabby was doing what she always does: listening to the hopes and concerns of her neighbors. That is the essence of what our democracy is all about. That is why this is more than a tragedy for those involved. It is a tragedy for Arizona and a tragedy for our entire country.

What Americans do at times of tragedy is to come together and support each other. So at this time I ask all Americans to join me and Michelle in keeping all the victims and their families, including Gabby, in our thoughts and prayers. Those who have been injured, we are rooting for them. And I know Gabby is as tough as they come, and I am hopeful that she's going to pull through.

Obviously, our hearts go out to the family members of those who have been slain. We are going to get to the bottom of this, and we're going to get through this. But in the meantime, I think all of us need to make sure that we're offering our thoughts and prayers to those concerned.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:46 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Christina-Taylor Green, who was killed in the shootings.

Statement on the Shootings in Tucson
January 8, 2011

This morning, in an unspeakable tragedy, a number of Americans were shot in Tucson, Arizona, at a constituent meeting with Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. And while we are continuing to receive information, we know that some have passed away and that Representative Giffords is gravely wounded.

We do not yet have all the answers. What we do know is that such a senseless and terrible act of violence has no place in a free society. I ask all Americans to join me and Michelle in keeping Representative Giffords, the victims of this tragedy, and their families in our prayers.

Statement on the Southern Sudan Independence Referendum
January 9, 2011

I am extremely pleased that polling has started for the Southern Sudan referendum and congratulate the people of Southern Sudan who are determining their own destiny. This is an historic step in the years-long process to fully implement the comprehensive peace agreement that ended the civil war between north and south. The international community is united and determined to ensure that all parties in Sudan live up to their obligations. We know that there are those who may try to disrupt the voting. Voters must be allowed access to polling stations and must be able to cast their ballots free from intimidation and coercion. All sides should refrain from inflammatory rhetoric or provocative actions that could raise tensions or prevent voters from expressing their will. Violence in the Abyei region should cease. And while a successful vote will be cause for celebration, an enormous amount of work remains to ensure the people of Sudan can live with security and dignity. The world will be watching in the coming days, and the United States will remain fully committed to helping the parties solve critical postreferendum issues regardless of the outcome of the vote.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Nicolas Sarkozy of France and an Exchange With Reporters
January 10, 2011

President Obama. We'll, I'm very grateful to have my dear friend Nicolas Sarkozy here. And I think Nicolas has agreed that at the top, I want to just make a few comments about the situation in Tucson, Arizona.

Obviously, all of us are still grieving and in shock from the tragedy that took place. Gabby Giffords and others are still fighting to recover. Families are still absorbing the enormity of their losses. We have a criminal investigation

that is ongoing and charges that no doubt will be brought against the perpetrator of this heinous crime.

I think it's important for us to also focus, though, on the extraordinary courage that was shown during the course of these events: a 20-year-old college student who ran into the line of fire to rescue his boss, a wounded woman who helped secure the ammunition that might have caused even more damage, the citizens who wrestled down the gunman. Part of what I think that speaks to is the best of America, even in the face of such mindless violence.

And so in the coming days, we're going to have a lot of time to reflect. Right now the main thing we're doing is to offer our thoughts and prayers to those who've been impacted, making sure that we're joining together and pulling together as a country. And as President of the United States, but also as a father, obviously, I'm spending a lot of time just thinking about the families and reaching out to them.

Now, I want to say to Nicolas that I want to offer my condolences to his countrymen as well. They just recently had two French citizens who were kidnaped in Niger. It points to the challenge of terrorism that we jointly share, and this is just one more area in which cooperation between France and the United States is so critical.

We don't have a stronger friend and a stronger ally than Nicolas Sarkozy and the French people. We have cooperated over the last several years on dealing with a global economic crisis, dealing with the challenges of terrorism, dealing with a range of geopolitical issues, from the Middle East to Iran to Afghanistan. And I've always found Nicolas to be an outstanding partner and an outstanding friend to the American people, as well as a leader on the world stage.

We spent the initial part of this meeting discussing the G–8 and G–20 agenda, because both in France and the United States and around the world, although we are in the process of healing and recovery from the disastrous recession that we went through, we're not yet where we want to be. Too many people are still out of work. Too many businesses are still having problems getting financing. There's still too many imbalances in the world economy that are inhibiting the prospects of growth.

And so in our discussions, with the French in the lead both at the G–8 and the G–20 this year, we discussed how we can coordinate our agendas to make sure that we are as productive as possible in delivering the kinds of reforms and followthrough that will result in prosperity for peoples around the globe.

After this brief press appearance, we're going to be having lunch, and during that time, we'll be discussing issues in which there has been extraordinarily close collaboration. Obviously, the French are one of our strongest allies—a NATO ally. They are key members of ISAF; French troops have been sacrificing alongside Americans in uniform in Afghanistan. And we are very grateful for those sacrifices. So we will be discussing our strategies there, building off of the discussions we had in Lisbon.

We're also going to be discussing issues like Iran and the impact that sanctions are currently having on their nuclear program and our hope that we can resolve this issue diplomatically. But we will be building on our shared resolve to assure that we're not seeing nuclear weapons in Iran.

We'll discuss the Middle East, where Nicolas and I share a deep and abiding belief in the need for two states standing side by side in peace and security.

We'll be discussing issues like Cote d'Ivoire, where democracy is being threatened at this moment and where France has extraordinary historical ties and has shown great leadership; Sudan, where a referendum is taking place this weekend in which so much is at stake in preventing outbreaks of violence that could end up devastating the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, but also where there's a prospect of a peaceful transition that could result in a better life for people in both the north and the south of Sudan.

We'll also, finally, be discussing Lebanon, where I think we are all deeply concerned with the Special Tribunal there and making sure that justice is appropriately served.

So I just want to say how much I appreciate not only Nicolas's friendship, but also his leadership. And I also want to point out that the last time that Nicolas and his lovely wife Carla were here, we sent them to Ben's Chili Bowl. I can't say that half-smokes will be on the menu here at the White House—the First Lady is having lunch with Carla while Nicolas and I have a working lunch—but I hope you find the hospitality outstanding nevertheless.

And on behalf of the American people, we want to again express our friendship to the French people and wish everybody in your country a happy new year.

President Sarkozy. Merci, Barack.

I first of all want to say to the American people how deeply moved and upset the French people have been at your loss and tragedy.

And I also want to thank President Obama for his expression of solidarity to the French people in light of the loss that we have felt at the cowardly killing of two young Frenchmen who were killed in a barbaric fashion by terrorists.

Both the U.S. and France are determined to stand firm as allies on this issue of terrorism. Both of us believe that any show of weakness would be culpable. And we have no choice but to go after these terrorists wherever they may be. When values as fundamental as those we cherish are being challenged, democracies cannot afford to give in. They must—they must—combat.

With the American President, we talked about the future of the G–20, and I said to him in no—in very clear terms that we wish to work hand in glove, France and the United States, on these issues.

We are in the 21st century, and we need new ideas for this new century. And with President Obama, we are determined to forge ahead, come up with these new ideas for the greater benefit of the peoples of the world, for their prosperity, and for the stability of this world of ours.

I've always been a great friend, a tremendous friend of the United States, and I know how important a role the U.S. plays in the world, how important the U.S. dollar is as the world's number-one currency. And with Barack Obama, we are determined to propose new ideas to get things moving, both within the framework of the G–8 and the G–20.

And our teams are going to be working very hard together to come up with common papers and common positions on the issues which are of interest and which come within the remit of the G–20, such as the matter of currencies, of commodity prices, and all that needs to be done in order to reduce the current and present imbalances.

Lastly, I want to thank Barack Obama, my host, for his show of leadership, and also point out that something that has always struck me about him is his ability to get to the fundamentals, the root of issues, the root causes of things. I appreciate his openness, the way he speaks very frankly about things with me. And I am convinced, ladies and gentlemen, that in 2011, we will be able to come up with the structural solutions that will enable us to settle, or at least to tackle, the world's imbalances and problems.

President Obama. Thank you. Thank you very much.

All right. Thank you, everybody.

Shootings in Tucson, AZ

Q. Will you go to Tucson, Mr. President?

President Obama. You know, the—we're in close consultations with the families who have suffered these losses, as well as Governor Brewer, congressional leadership. There is no doubt that we will establish some mechanism, memorial, during the course of the next several days. And when we have that, we will announce it.

But I think it's going to be important, I think, for the country as a whole, as well as the people of Arizona, to feel as if we are speaking directly to our sense of loss, but also speaking to our hopes for the future and how out of this tragedy, we can come together as a stronger nation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:22 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his re-

marks, he referred to Rep. Gabrielle D. Giffords, who was shot while meeting with constituents in Tucson, AZ, on January 8; Jared L. Loughner, suspected gunman in the January 8 shootings in Tucson, AZ; Daniel Hernandez, Rep. Giffords's intern; Tucson residents Patricia Maisch, Bill Badger, Roger Salzgeber, and Joseph Zamudio, who helped subdue Mr. Loughner; Antoine de Leocour and Vincent Delory, French citizens kidnaped in Niger by suspected terrorists on January 7 and killed during a rescue attempt by French and Nigerian troops; and Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, wife of President Sarkozy. President Sarkozy spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the First Anniversary of the Earthquake in Haiti
January 11, 2011

As we mark 1 year since the catastrophic earthquake in Haiti, we honor the memory of the quarter of a million Haitians who were lost, along with more than 100 Americans, many United Nations personnel, and citizens from dozens of nations. We recall how Americans, civilian and military, joined with people from around the world in one of the largest humanitarian efforts ever attempted. And we continue to be inspired by the Haitian people and our vibrant Haitian American community, who have faced unimaginable loss with extraordinary courage and faith.

Since the first moments of the disaster, the United States has helped to rally international support for Haiti's recovery and reconstruction and respond to new challenges, such as the outbreak of cholera and Hurricane Tomas. This global effort, led by the Haitian Government, continues today and has been matched by the tremendous compassion of the American people, who, in difficult economic times, have given generously to help.

Over the past year, countless lives have been saved, and many Haitians affected by the earthquake now have better access to food, water, and health care than they did before the disaster. Still, too much rubble continues to clog the streets, too many people are still living in tents, and for so many Haitians, progress has not come fast enough. As we have said all along, helping the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere recover from one of the worst natural disasters ever to strike our hemisphere will take years, if not decades.

So on this day, when our thoughts and prayers are with the Haitian people, my message is the same as it was last year: Haiti can and must lead the way with a strong vision for its future. The international community must now fulfill the pledges it has made to ensure a strong and sustained long-term effort. And as they forge ahead with the hard work of rebuilding their proud country, the people of Haiti will continue to have an enduring partner in the United States.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996
January 11, 2011

Dear _____:

Consistent with section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114)(the "Act"), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension, for 6 months beyond February 1, 2011, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Daniel K. Inouye, chairman, and W. Thad Cochran, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; John F. Kerry, chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Harold D. Rogers, chairman, and Norman D. Dicks, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, chairman, and Howard L. Berman, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Victims of the Shootings in Tucson, Arizona
January 12, 2011

Thank you very much. Please, please be seated. To the families of those we've lost; to all who called them friends; to the students of this university, the public servants who are gathered here, the people of Tucson, and the people of Arizona: I have come here tonight as an American who, like all Americans, kneels to pray with you today and will stand by you tomorrow.

There is nothing I can say that will fill the sudden hole torn in your hearts. But know this: The hopes of a nation are here tonight. We mourn with you for the fallen. We join you in your grief. And we add our faith to yours that Representative Gabrielle Giffords and the other living victims of this tragedy will pull through.

Scripture tells us:

> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
> the holy place where the Most High dwells.
> God is within her, she will not fall;
> God will help her at break of day.

On Saturday morning, Gabby, her staff, and many of her constituents gathered outside a supermarket to exercise their right to peaceful assembly and free speech. They were fulfilling a central tenet of the democracy envisioned by our Founders: representatives of the people answering questions to their constituents, so as to carry their concerns back to our Nation's Capital. Gabby called it "Congress on Your Corner," just an updated version of government of and by and for the people.

And that quintessentially American scene, that was the scene that was shattered by a gunman's bullets. And the six people who lost their lives on Saturday, they too represented what is best in us, what is best in America.

Judge John Roll served our legal system for nearly 40 years. A graduate of this university and a graduate of this law school, Judge Roll was recommended for the Federal bench by John McCain 20 years ago, appointed by President George H.W. Bush, and rose to become Arizona's chief Federal judge.

His colleagues described him as the hardest working judge within the ninth circuit. He was on his way back from attending Mass, as he did every day, when he decided to stop by and say hi to his Representative. John is survived by his loving wife Maureen, his three sons, and his five beautiful grandchildren.

George and Dorothy Morris—Dot to her friends—were high school sweethearts who got married and had two daughters. They did everything together, traveling the open road in their RV, enjoying what their friends called a 50-year honeymoon. Saturday morning, they went by the Safeway to hear what their Congresswoman had to say. When gunfire rang out, George, a former marine, instinctively tried to shield his wife. Both were shot. Dot passed away.

A New Jersey native, Phyllis Schneck retired to Tucson to beat the snow. But in the summer, she would return east, where her world revolved around her three children, her seven grandchildren, and 2-year-old great-granddaughter. A gifted quilter, she'd often work under a favorite tree, or sometimes, she'd sew aprons with the logos of the Jets and the Giants—[*laughter*]—to give out at the church

where she volunteered. A Republican, she took a liking to Gabby and wanted to get to know her better.

Dorwan and Mavy Stoddard grew up in Tucson together about 70 years ago. They moved apart and started their own respective families. But after both were widowed, they found their way back here to, as one of Mavy's daughters put it, "be boyfriend and girlfriend again." [*Laughter*]

When they weren't out on the road in their motor home, you could find them just up the road, helping folks in need at the Mountain Avenue Church of Christ. A retired construction worker, Dorwan spent his spare time fixing up the church along with his dog Tux. His final act of selflessness was to dive on top of his wife, sacrificing his life for hers.

Everything, everything Gabe Zimmerman did, he did with passion. But his true passion was helping people. As Gabby's outreach director, he made the cares of thousands of her constituents his own, seeing to it that seniors got the Medicare benefits that they had earned, that veterans got the medals and the care that they deserved, that Government was working for ordinary folks. He died doing what he loved, talking with people and seeing how he could help. And Gabe is survived by his parents Ross and Emily, his brother Ben, and his fiancée Kelly, who he planned to marry next year.

And then there is 9-year-old Christina-Taylor Green. Christina was an A student, she was a dancer, she was a gymnast, she was a swimmer. She decided that she wanted to be the first woman to play in the Major Leagues, and as the only girl on her Little League team, no one put it past her.

She showed an appreciation for life uncommon for a girl her age. She'd remind her mother: "We are so blessed. We have the best life." And she'd pay those blessings back by participating in a charity that helped children who were less fortunate.

Our hearts are broken by their sudden passing. Our hearts are broken, and yet our hearts also have reason for fullness.

Our hearts are full of hope and thanks for the 13 Americans who survived the shooting, including the Congresswoman many of them went to see on Saturday.

I have just come from the University Medical Center, just a mile from here, where our friend Gabby courageously fights to recover even as we speak. And I want to tell you—her husband Mark is here, and he allows me to share this with you—right after we went to visit, a few minutes after we left her room and some of her colleagues in Congress were in the room, Gabby opened her eyes for the first time. [*Applause*] Gabby opened her eyes for the first time.

Gabby opened her eyes. Gabby opened her eyes, so I can tell you, she knows we are here, she knows we love her, and she knows that we are rooting for her through what is undoubtedly going to be a difficult journey. We are there for her.

Our hearts are full of thanks for that good news, and our hearts are full of gratitude for those who saved others. We are grateful to Daniel Hernandez, a volunteer in Gabby's office.

And, Daniel, I'm sorry, you may deny it, but we've decided you are a hero because you ran through the chaos to minister to your boss and tended to her wounds and helped keep her alive.

We are grateful to the men who tackled the gunman as he stopped to reload. They're right over there. We are grateful for petite Patricia Maisch, who wrestled away the killer's ammunition and undoubtedly saved some lives. And we are grateful for the doctors and nurses and first-responders who worked wonders to heal those who'd been hurt. We are grateful to them.

These men and women remind us that heroism is found not only on the fields of battle. They remind us that heroism does not require special training or physical strength. Heroism is here, in the hearts of so many of our fellow citizens, all around us, just waiting to be summoned, as it was on Saturday morning. Their actions, their selflessness poses a challenge to each of us. It raises a question of what,

beyond prayers and expressions of concern, is required of us going forward. How can we honor the fallen? How can we be true to their memory?

You see, when a tragedy like this strikes, it is part of our nature to demand explanations, to try to impose some order on the chaos and make sense out of that which seems senseless. Already we've seen a national conversation commence, not only about the motivations behind these killings, but about everything from the merits of gun safety laws to the adequacy of our mental health system. And much of this process of debating what might be done to prevent such tragedies in the future is an essential ingredient in our exercise of self-government.

But at a time when our discourse has become so sharply polarized, at a time when we are far too eager to lay the blame for all that ails the world at the feet of those who happen to think differently than we do, it's important for us to pause for a moment and make sure that we're talking with each other in a way that heals, not in a way that wounds.

Scripture tells us that there is evil in the world and that terrible things happen for reasons that defy human understanding. In the words of Job, "When I looked for light, then came darkness." Bad things happen, and we have to guard against simple explanations in the aftermath.

For the truth is, none of us can know exactly what triggered this vicious attack. None of us can know with any certainty what might have stopped these shots from being fired or what thoughts lurked in the inner recesses of a violent man's mind. Yes, we have to examine all the facts behind this tragedy. We cannot and will not be passive in the face of such violence. We should be willing to challenge old assumptions in order to lessen the prospects of such violence in the future. But what we cannot do is use this tragedy as one more occasion to turn on each other. That we cannot do. [*Applause*] That we cannot do.

As we discuss these issues, let each of us do so with a good dose of humility. Rather than pointing fingers or assigning blame, let's use this occasion to expand our moral imaginations, to listen to each other more carefully, to sharpen our instincts for empathy and remind ourselves of all the ways that our hopes and dreams are bound together.

After all, that's what most of us do when we lose somebody in our family, especially if the loss is unexpected. We're shaken out of our routines. We're forced to look inward. We reflect on the past: Did we spend enough time with an aging parent, we wonder. Did we express our gratitude for all the sacrifices that they made for us? Did we tell a spouse just how desperately we loved them, not just once in a while, but every single day?

So sudden loss causes us to look backward, but it also forces us to look forward, to reflect on the present and the future, on the manner in which we live our lives and nurture our relationships with those who are still with us.

We may ask ourselves if we've shown enough kindness and generosity and compassion to the people in our lives. Perhaps we question whether we're doing right by our children or our community, whether our priorities are in order.

We recognize our own mortality, and we are reminded that in the fleeting time we have on this Earth, what matters is not wealth or status or power or fame, but rather, how well we have loved and what small part we have played in making the lives of other people better.

And that process—that process of reflection, of making sure we align our values with our actions—that, I believe, is what a tragedy like this requires.

For those who were harmed, those who were killed, they are part of our family, an American family 300 million strong. We may not have known them personally, but surely we see ourselves in them. In George and Dot, in Dorwan and Mavy, we sense the abiding love we have for our own husbands, our own wives, our own life partners. Phyllis, she's our mom or our grandma; Gabe, our brother or son. In Judge Roll, we recognize not only a man who prized his family and doing his job well, but also a man who embodied America's fidelity to the law.

And in Gabby, in Gabby, we see a reflection of our public-spiritedness, that desire to participate in that sometimes frustrating, sometimes contentious, but always necessary and never-ending process to form a more perfect Union.

And in Christina, in Christina, we see all of our children, so curious, so trusting, so energetic, so full of magic, so deserving of our love, and so deserving of our good example.

If this tragedy prompts reflection and debate—as it should—let's make sure it's worthy of those we have lost. Let's make sure it's not on the usual plane of politics and point-scoring and pettiness that drifts away in the next news cycle.

The loss of these wonderful people should make every one of us strive to be better: to be better in our private lives, to be better friends and neighbors, coworkers and parents. And if, as has been discussed in recent days, their death helps usher in more civility in our public discourse, let us remember it is not because a simple lack of civility caused this tragedy—it did not—but rather because only a more civil and honest public discourse can help us face up to the challenges of our Nation in a way that would make them proud.

We should be civil because we want to live up to the example of public servants like John Roll and Gabby Giffords, who knew first and foremost that we are all Americans, and that we can question each other's ideas without questioning each other's love of country, and that our task, working together, is to constantly widen the circle of our concern so that we bequeath the American Dream to future generations.

They believed and I believe that we can be better. Those who died here, those who saved lives here, they help me believe. We may not be able to stop all evil in the world, but I know that how we treat one another, that's entirely up to us.

And I believe that for all our imperfections, we are full of decency and goodness and that the forces that divide us are not as strong as those that unite us.

That's what I believe, in part because that's what a child like Christina-Taylor Green believed.

Imagine, imagine for a moment, here was a young girl who was just becoming aware of our democracy, just beginning to understand the obligations of citizenship, just starting to glimpse the fact that someday, she too might play a part in shaping her Nation's future. She had been elected to her student council. She saw public service as something exciting and hopeful. She was off to meet her Congresswoman, someone she was sure was good and important and might be a role model. She saw all this through the eyes of a child, undimmed by the cynicism or vitriol that we adults all too often just take for granted.

I want to live up to her expectations. I want our democracy to be as good as Christina imagined it. I want America to be as good as she imagined it. All of us, we should do everything we can do to make sure this country lives up to our children's expectations.

As has already been mentioned, Christina was given to us on September 11, 2001, one of 50 babies born that day to be pictured in a book called "Faces of Hope." On either side of her photo in that book were simple wishes for a child's life. "I hope you help those in need," read one. "I hope you know all the words to the national anthem and sing it with your hand over your heart." "I hope you jump in rain puddles."

If there are rain puddles in Heaven, Christina is jumping in them today. And here on this Earth—here on this Earth, we place our hands over our hearts, and we commit ourselves as Americans to forging a country that is forever worthy of her gentle, happy spirit.

May God bless and keep those we've lost in restful and eternal peace, may He love and watch over the survivors, and may He bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:43 p.m. in the McKale Memorial Center at the University of Arizona. In his remarks, he referred to Jared L. Loughner, suspected gunman in the January 8 shootings in Tucson, AZ; Emily Nottingham,

mother, and Kelly O'Brien, fiancée, of Gabriel M. Zimmerman; Capt. Mark E. Kelly, USN, husband of Rep. Giffords; and Tucson residents Bill Badger, Roger Salzgeber, and Joseph Zamudio, who helped subdue Mr. Loughner.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 13, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 2011.

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 23, 1995, has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities that have the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process and that are hostile to United States interests in the region. Such actions constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process and to maintain in force the economic sanctions against them to respond to this threat.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Former United States Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard C. Holbrooke

January 14, 2011

To Kati, Anthony, David, and Elizabeth, to all the friends and admirers of Richard, we come together to celebrate an extraordinary life.

In 1999, at the height of the crisis in Kosovo, Richard gave an interview in which he addressed the question of why the United States was engaged in bringing peace to that war-torn corner of the world. Why bother? His answer was simple: "Because we could make a difference." Because we could make a difference.

That is the story of American leadership in the world. And that is also the story of Richard Holbrooke. He made a difference.

In 1962, when he was just 22 years old, he set out for Vietnam as a Foreign Service officer. He could not have known the twists and turns that lay ahead of him and his country in that war or the road that he would travel over nearly five decades of service to his country. But it's no coincidence that his life story so closely paralleled the major events of his times.

The list of places he served and the things he did reads as a chronicle of American foreign policy: speaking truth to power from the Mekong Delta to the Paris peace talks, paving the way to our normalization of relations with China, serving as Ambassador in a newly unified Germany, bringing peace to the Balkans, strengthening our relationship with the United Nations, and working to advance peace and progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Richard came of an age looking up to the men who had helped shape the postwar world: Dean Acheson, Averell Harriman, Clark Clifford, Dean Rusk. And in many ways, he was the leading light of a generation of American diplomats who came of age in Vietnam.

It was a generation that came to know both the tragic limits and awesome possibilities of American power: born at a time of triumph in World War II, steeped in the painful lessons of Southeast Asia, participants in the twilight struggle that led ultimately to freedom's triumph during the cold war.

After the shadow of communism lifted along with the Iron Curtain, Richard understood that America could not retreat from the world. He recognized that our prosperity is tied to that of others, that our security is endangered by instability abroad, and most importantly, that our moral leadership is at stake when innocent men, women, and children are slaughtered through senseless violence, whether it's in Srebrenica or Islamabad.

Richard possessed a hardheaded, clear-eyed realism about how the world works. He was not naive, but he also believed that America has a unique responsibility in the course of human events. He understood American power, in all its complexity, and believed that when it is applied with purpose and principle, it can tip the scales of history. And that coupling of realism and idealism, which has always represented what is best in American foreign policy, that was at the heart of his work in Bosnia, where he negotiated and cajoled and threatened all at once, until peace was the only outcome possible.

And by the time I came to know Richard, his place in history was assured. His options in the private sector, where so many of his peers had settled, were too numerous to mention. But from my first conversation with him in Chicago, in my transition office, a conversation in which he teared up when he began to talk about the importance of restoring America's place in the world, it was clear that Richard was not comfortable on the sidelines. He belonged in the arena.

To Kati and to his wonderful family, I am personally grateful. I know that every hour he spent with me in the Situation Room or spent traveling to Southeast Asia, South Asia, was time spent away from you. You shared in his sacrifice, and that sacrifice is made greater because he loved you so. He served his country until his final moments.

Those who take the measure of his last mission will see his foresight. He understood that the futures of Afghanistan and Pakistan are tied together. In Afghanistan, he cultivated areas like agriculture and governance to seed stability. With Pakistan, he created new habits of cooperation to overcome decades of mistrust. And globally, he helped align the approaches of 49 nations.

Were he here with us, I know Richard would credit the extraordinary team that he assembled. And today I'd like to make a personal appeal to the SRAP team, particularly the young people: Stay in public service, serve your country, seek the peace that your mentor so ardently sought. I also know that Richard would want us to lift up the next generation of public servants, particularly our diplomats, who so rarely receive credit. And so I'm proud to announce the creation of an annual Richard C. Holbrooke Award to honor excellence in American diplomacy.

As we look to the next generation, it is fitting, as David mentioned, that this memorial take place at the Kennedy Center, named for the President who called Richard's generation to serve. It's also fitting that this memorial takes place at a time when our Nation has recently received a tragic reminder that we must never take our public servants for granted and must always honor their work.

America is not defined by ethnicity. It's not defined by geography. We are a nation born of an idea, a commitment to human freedom.

And over the last five decades, there have been countless times when people made the mistake of counting on America's decline or disengagement. Time and again, those voices have been proven wrong, but only because of the service and sacrifice of exceptional men and women, those who answered the call of history and made America's cause their own.

Like the country he served, Richard contained complexities. So full of life, he was a man both confident in himself and curious about others, alive to the world around him with a character that is captured in the words of a Mathew Arnold poem that he admired:

> But often, in the din of strife,
> there rises an unspeakable desire
> after the knowledge of the buried life;
> [the] thirst to spend our fire and restless force
> in tracking our true, original course;
> a longing to inquire
> into the mystery of this heart which beats
> so wild, so deep in us—to know
> whence our lives come and where they go.

Richard is gone now, but we carry with us his thirst to know, to grasp, and to heal the world around him. His legacy is seen in the children of Bosnia who lived to raise families of their own, in a Europe that is peaceful and united and free, in young boys and girls from the tribal regions of Pakistan to whom he pledged our country's friendship, and in the role that America continues to play as a light to all who aspire to live in freedom and in dignity.

Five decades after a young President called him to serve, we can confidently say that Richard bore the burden to assure the survival and success of liberty. He made a difference. Let us now carry that work forward in our time.

May God bless the memory of Richard Holbrooke, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:33 p.m. at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Kati Marton, wife, Anthony and David Holbrooke, sons, and Elizabeth Jennings, stepdaughter, of former Ambassador Holbrooke.

Statement on the Situation in Tunisia
January 14, 2011

I condemn and deplore the use of violence against citizens peacefully voicing their opinion in Tunisia, and I applaud the courage and dignity of the Tunisian people. The United States stands with the entire international community in bearing witness to this brave and determined struggle for the universal rights that we must all uphold, and we will long remember the images of the Tunisian people seeking to make their voices heard. I urge all parties to maintain calm and avoid violence and call on the Tunisian Government to respect human rights and to hold free and fair elections in the near future that reflect the true will and aspirations of the Tunisian people.

As I have said before, each nation gives life to the principle of democracy in its own way, grounded in the traditions of its own people, and those countries that respect the universal rights of their people are stronger and more successful than those that do not. I have no doubt that Tunisia's future will be brighter if it is guided by the voices of the Tunisian people.

The President's Weekly Address
January 15, 2011

It's been 1 week since tragedy visited Tucson, Arizona. We properly spent much of the week mourning the victims and remembering their lives. We also discovered stories that serve to lift us up, stories of heroism and bravery, of courage and community, stories that remind us that we are one American family, 300 million strong.

One of the places we saw that sense of community on display was on the floor of the House of Representatives, where Gabby Giffords, who inspires us with her recovery, is deeply missed by her colleagues. One by one, Representatives from all parts of the country and all points of view rose in common cause to honor Gabby and the other victims and to reflect on our shared hopes for this country.

As shrill and discordant as our politics can be at times, it was a moment that reminded us of who we really are and how much we depend on one another. While we can't escape our grief for those we've lost, we carry on now, mindful of those truths.

We carry on because we have to. After all, this is still a time of great challenges for us to solve. We've got to grow jobs faster and forge a stronger, more competitive economy. We've got to shore up our budget and bring down our deficits. We've got to keep our people safe and see to it that the American Dream remains vibrant and alive for our children and our grandchildren.

These are challenges I believe we can meet. And I believe we can do it in a way worthy of those who sent us here to serve. So as business resumes, I look forward to working together in that same spirit of common cause with Members of Congress from both parties, because before we are Democrats or Republicans, we are Americans.

And as we perform the work of this Nation, my prayer is that we stay true to our words and turn to those examples of heroism and courage and perseverance to bring out the better in all of us.

Thanks for listening, and have a wonderful weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:20 p.m. on January 14 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on January 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 15.

Statement on the Southern Sudan Independence Referendum
January 16, 2011

The United States congratulates the Sudanese people, the Government of Sudan, and the Government of Southern Sudan on the end of their historic, week-long referendum on the future of Southern Sudan. The sight of so many Sudanese casting their votes in a peaceful and orderly fashion was an inspiration to the world and a tribute to the determination of the people and leaders of south Sudan to forge a better future. We wish to commend the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission, the Southern Sudan Referendum Board, the domestic and international observers, the United Nations Mission in Sudan, and most of all, the voters, who turned out in high numbers and high spirits to take their turn at the ballot box. The past week has given the world renewed faith in the prospect of a peaceful, prosperous future for all of the Sudanese people, a future that the American people long to see in Sudan.

The referendum now moves into another phase, and while official results will not be available for some time, independent observers have been extremely encouraged by the credibility of the process to date. We urge all parties to continue to urge calm and show

restraint as the parties work to complete implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The United States will continue to assist the parties amid the tough challenges and historic opportunities that lie ahead.

Remarks at a Service Event at Stuart-Hobson Middle School
January 17, 2011

This is just a outstanding program and an example of what Martin Luther King's birthday should be all about. I want to thank all the mentees and mentors who are participating.

Dr. King obviously had a dream of justice and equality in our society, but he also had a dream of service, that you could be a drum major for service; you could lead by giving back to our communities. And that's what this program is all about, and that's what these participants are all about.

Michelle and I and the girls are extraordinarily proud that each year on Martin Luther King's birthday, this is how we celebrate—is making sure that we're giving a little something back to the community. And I hope that all the projects that are taking place all across the country on this day are getting similar attention, because this is part of what America is all about. And after a painful week where so many of us were focused on tragedy, it's good for us to remind ourselves of what this country is all about. This kind of service project is what's best in us, and we're thrilled with everybody who is participating.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m.

Statement on the United Nations Special Tribunal for Lebanon Indictment
January 17, 2011

I welcome the announcement by the Office of the Prosecutor for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon today that he has filed an indictment relating to the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and 22 others. This action represents an important step toward ending the era of impunity for murder in Lebanon and achieving justice for the Lebanese people. I know that this is a significant and emotional time for the Lebanese people, and we join the international community in calling on all Lebanese leaders and factions to preserve calm and exercise restraint. The United States is a strong friend of Lebanon, and we stand steadfastly with others in support of Lebanese sovereignty, independence, and stability.

The Special Tribunal for Lebanon must be allowed to continue its work, free from interference and coercion. That is the way to advance the search for the truth, the cause of justice, and the future of Lebanon. Those who have tried to manufacture a crisis and force a choice between justice or stability in Lebanon are offering a false choice, as the Lebanese people have a right to both justice and stability, and efforts to undercut the STL only legitimize its efforts and suggest its opponents have something to hide. Any attempt to fuel tensions and instability, in Lebanon or in the region, will only undermine the very freedom and aspirations that the Lebanese people seek and that so many nations support. At this critical moment, all friends of Lebanon must stand with the people of Lebanon.

NOTE: The statement referred to Daniel A. Bellemare, Prosecutor, United Nations Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

Statement on Senator G. Kent Conrad's Decision Not To Seek Reelection
January 18, 2011

For more than 20 years, Kent Conrad has been a tireless advocate for the people of North Dakota. During that time, he has shown an unmatched dedication to putting our country on a sound fiscal path and a commitment to meeting our Nation's energy challenges. He has also been a good friend to me, and while I am saddened to see him leave the Senate, I look forward to working with him during the next 2 years on the important issues facing our country. Michelle and I thank Senator Conrad for his leadership and service and wish him and his family all the best in their future endeavors.

Statement on the Death of R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.
January 18, 2011

I was deeply saddened to learn about the passing of Sargent Shriver, one of the brightest lights of the greatest generation. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, Sarge came to embody the idea of public service. Of his many enduring contributions, he will perhaps best be remembered as the founding Director of the Peace Corps, helping make it possible for generations of Americans to serve as ambassadors of good will abroad. His loss will be felt in all of the communities around the world that have been touched by Peace Corps volunteers over the past half century and all of the lives that have been made better by his efforts to address inequality and injustice here at home. My thoughts and prayers are with Robert, Maria, Tim, Mark, and Anthony, and the entire Shriver family during this sad time.

NOTE: The statement referred to the children of R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.

Statement on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
January 18, 2011

Today, the American people have greater health security than they did a year ago. Because of the Affordable Care Act, Americans no longer have to live in fear that insurance companies will drop or cap their coverage if they get sick or that they'll face double-digit premium increases with no accountability or recourse. Small businesses across the country can take advantage of a new health care tax credit to offer coverage to their employees, and children suffering from an illness or preexisting condition can no longer be denied coverage. Parents now can add their adult children up to age 26 to their health plans, and all Americans on new plans can access preventive care to keep them healthy with no additional out-of-pocket costs. Older Americans are seeing better benefits, lower prescription drug costs, and a stronger Medicare. And the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reports that improvements in health care delivery system as a result of this law will reduce Federal deficits by over a trillion dollars in the next two decades.

So I'm willing and eager to work with both Democrats and Republicans to improve the Affordable Care Act, but we can't go backward. Americans deserve the freedom and security of knowing that insurance companies can't deny, cap, or drop their coverage when they need it the most, while taking meaningful steps to curb runaway health care costs.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for President Hu Jintao of China
January 19, 2011

President Obama. Good morning, everyone. President Hu, members of the Chinese delegation, on behalf of Michelle and myself, welcome to the White House, and on behalf of the American people, welcome to the United States.

Three decades ago, on a January day like this, another American President stood here and welcomed another Chinese leader for the historic normalization of relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China. On that day, Deng Xiaoping spoke of the great possibilities of cooperation between our two nations.

Looking back on that winter day in 1979, it is now clear: The previous 30 years had been a time of estrangement for our two countries; the 30 years since have been a time of growing exchanges and understanding. And with this visit, we can lay the foundation for the next 30 years.

At a time when some doubt the benefits of cooperation between the United States and China, this visit is also a chance to demonstrate a simple truth: We have an enormous stake in each other's success. In an interconnected world, in a global economy, nations—including our own—will be more prosperous and more secure when we work together.

The United States welcomes China's rise as a strong, prosperous, and successful member of the community of nations. Indeed, China's success has brought with it economic benefits for our people as well as yours, and our cooperation on a range of issues has helped advance stability in the Asia-Pacific and in the world.

We also know this: History shows that societies are more harmonious, nations are more successful, and the world is more just when the rights and responsibilities of all nations and all people are upheld, including the universal rights of every human being.

Mr. President, we can learn from our people: Chinese and American students and educators, businesspeople, tourists, researchers, and scientists, including Chinese Americans who are here today. They work together and make progress together every single day. They know that even as our nations compete in some areas, we can cooperate in so many others, in a spirit of mutual respect, for our mutual benefit.

What Deng Xiaoping said long ago remains true today. There are still great possibilities for cooperation between our countries. President Hu, members of the Chinese delegation, let us seize these possibilities together. Welcome to the United States of America. *Huanying.*

President Hu. Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, it gives me great pleasure to come to Washington and pay a state visit to the United States at the beginning of the new year, at the invitation of President Obama. At this point in time, let me extend, on behalf of the 1.3 billion Chinese people, sincere greetings and best wishes to the people of the United States.

I have come to the United States to increase mutual trust, enhance friendship, deepen cooperation, and push forward the positive, cooperative, and comprehensive China-U.S. relationship for the 21st century.

Over the past 32 years, since the establishment of diplomatic ties, the China-U.S. relationship has grown into one with strategic significance and global influence. Since President Obama took office, with concerted efforts of the two sides, our cooperation in various fields has produced fruitful results and our relations have achieved new progress. This has brought real benefits to our two peoples and contributed greatly to world peace and development.

As we enter the second decade of the 21st century, the people of both China and the United States want to see further progress in our relations, and people around the globe want to see greater prosperity in the world. Under the new circumstances and in the face of new challenges, China and United States share broad common interests and important common responsibilities. We should adopt a long-term perspective, seek common ground

while resolving differences, and work together to achieve sustained, sound, and steady development of our relations. I hope that through this visit, our two countries will advance the positive, cooperative, and comprehensive relationship and open a new chapter in our cooperation as partners.

Our cooperation as partners should be based on mutual respect. We live in an increasingly diverse and colorful world. China and the United States should respect each other's choice of development path and each other's core interests. We should deepen mutual understanding through communication, increase mutual trust through dialogue, and expand common ground through exchanges.

Our cooperation as partners should be based on mutual benefit. China's future and destiny are increasingly tied to those of the world, and China-U.S. relations have become closer. Our two countries should seek to learn from each other through exchanges and achieve win-win progress through cooperation. This is the right approach for us to develop our relations.

Our cooperation as partners should be based on joint efforts to meet challenges. China and United States should step up communication and coordination in international affairs, work together to counter the global challenges, and make a greater contribution to world peace and development.

Our cooperation as partners should be based on the extensive involvement of the people. The Chinese and American people cherish deep friendship towards each other, and they fought side by side at defining moments in history when the future and the destiny of mankind were at the stake. The two peoples should expand exchanges and enhance friendship. This will offer a inexhaustible driving force for the growth of our relations.

Ladies and gentlemen, our world today is undergoing major development, major changes, and major adjustments. To pursue peace, development, and cooperation is the irresistible trend of our time. Let us seize the opportunity to forge ahead, hand in hand, and work together to enhance cooperation as partners, and let us work with all other countries to build a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

Thank you once again, Mr. President, for your warm welcome.

President Obama. Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where President Hu was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to former President Jimmy Carter. President Hu spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks With President Hu Jintao of China During a Roundtable Discussion With American and Chinese Business Leaders
January 19, 2011

President Obama. Well, first of all, thanks to all of you for joining, both American and Chinese business leaders.

President Hu and I have had some excellent discussions, both last night in a smaller dinner and then this morning with our respective teams. But we very much believe that in order for the U.S.-China relationship to deepen and to grow, that it can't just be a matter of government-to-government contacts.

And there has been no sector of our societies that have been stronger proponents of U.S.-China relations than the business sector. And so I'm very pleased that we have some of America's top businesses here. Many of them have a longstanding relationship with China, have been selling American goods, promoting American services in China. And they, I think, can testify to the benefits that the United States obtains from strong relations with China.

We've got some Chinese business leaders here who I know are already doing business in the United States, making investments in the United States, engaging in joint ventures in the United States, and helping grow the economy here in the United States. I know they're interested in finding ways that they can expand their activities in the United States.

And so I think our goal here today was to make sure that we break out of the old stereotypes that somehow China is simply taking manufacturing jobs and taking advantage of low wages; the U.S. is importing cheap goods and thereby having cheaper products, but also putting strains on our employment base. The relationship is much more complex than that, and it has much more potential than that.

China is one of the top markets for American exports. We're now exporting more than $100 billion a year in goods and services to China, and that supports about half a million American jobs, from manufacturing to agriculture. And in fact, our exports to China are growing nearly twice as fast as our exports to the rest of the world.

Of course, here in the United States, we've got one of the most open economies in the world, and that makes us a top destination for Chinese exports, but also Chinese investment.

It is important, I think, to note that even with China's enormous population, the United States still does more trade with Europe than it does with China. That, I think, gives an indication of the amount of progress that can be made if we are consulting with each other, if we are hearing specifically from businesses in terms of how we can ease some of the frictions that exist in our trading relationship.

And so my hope is that today, in the brief time that we have, we'll be able to hear some concrete ideas about how we make sure that fair—that trade is fair, that there's a level playing field; how can we protect intellectual property; how can we promote innovation; how can both of our governments remove barriers to trade and barriers to job creation.

And with China's growing middle class, I believe that, over the coming years, we can more than double our exports to China and create more jobs here in the United States. And I'm sure that Chinese business leaders see enormous opportunities here as well.

So with that, I'd like to just turn it over briefly to President Hu, and then maybe we can hear from some of the leaders around the table.

President Hu. Business leaders, today it gives me a great pleasure to be here with President Obama and meet with you business leaders.

All of you around this table and your companies are leading performers of the two countries. You have not only made positive contribution to the economic growth of your respective countries, but also to China-U.S. relations.

So I wish to offer you my sincere appreciation. All business leaders around this table have seized the opportunities presented by the deepening economic globalization. You have been working vigorously to expand market in each other's countries. You have grown your business, but also promoted mutual beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

I will cite a set of statistics to show how far we have come.

In 1979, when we formally established diplomatic ties, our two-way trade was less than 2.5 billion U.S. dollars. But the figure for last year was 380 billion U.S. dollars, which is more than 150-fold increase. Our mutual investment also started from virtually nothing to an accumulation of 70 billion U.S. dollars.

The trade and investment cooperation between our two countries have indeed brought real benefits to the people of our countries and important business communities—opportunities for our business communities.

According to figures, our two-way trade has brought about 60 billion U.S. dollars of benefits to U.S. consumers.

If we look ahead to the future, our trade cooperation enjoys a promising future. Here, I have a message to all of you. That is, China is speeding up this transformation of economic growth pattern and economic restructuring. We are focusing our efforts to boosting domestic demand, especially consumer spending.

In recent years, China's domestic spending has been growing at a double-digit rate every year. In 2010, our domestic market has surpassed a scale of 2 trillion U.S. dollars. And here in the United States, you are also working all out to stimulate your economy.

President Obama has launched a program to double your exports. Both in the dinner last night and in my meeting with President Obama just now, we discussed how to advance economic cooperation between our two countries across the board.

We agreed to strengthen our cooperation in the financial, economic, trade, energy, the environment, science and technology, agriculture, infrastructure, and many other fields.

So indeed, there is a promising future for trade and investment cooperation between our two countries. I do hope that companies from both countries can seize the opportunities, take active options, and achieve great things.

I also have a message to American entrepreneurs. That is, we welcome you as companies to China. China follows reform and opening up. We will, as always, try to follow—provide a transparent, just, fair, highly efficient investment climate to U.S. companies and other foreign companies.

I also wish to tell you that all companies registered in China are given national treatment. In terms of innovation products, accreditation, government procurement, IPR protection, the Chinese Government will give them equal treatment.

Here, I also have a message to Chinese entrepreneurs. That is, the Chinese Government will, as it has always done, support you in making investments and doing business here in the United States. I hope that you can continue to be enterprising and creative and, at the same time, don't forget to give back to the local communities.

I do believe that President Obama and the U.S. administration will provide a level playing field for Chinese companies doing—making investments here in the United States.

To conclude, I wish the companies you represent even greater growth in the new year. And I also expect that you can make even greater contribution to promoting trade and investment cooperation between our two countries.

And now I'm ready to listen to your views. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:36 p.m. in Room 430 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. President Hu spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

The President's News Conference With President Hu Jintao of China
January 19, 2011

President Obama. Everybody, please have a seat. Good afternoon. It is my pleasure to welcome President Hu to the White House and to return the hospitality that he showed when I visited China last year. This is our eighth meeting. Together, we've shown that the United States and China, when we cooperate, can receive substantial benefits.

The positive, constructive, cooperative U.S.-China relationship is good for the United States. We just had a very good meeting with the business leaders from both our countries, and they pointed out that China is one of the top markets for American exports. We're now exporting more than $100 billion a year in goods and services to China, which supports more than half a million American jobs. In fact, our exports to China are growing nearly twice as fast as our exports to the rest of the world, making it a key part of my goal of doubling American exports and keeping America competitive in the 21st century.

Cooperation between our countries is also good for China. China's extraordinary economic growth has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. And this is a tribute to the Chinese people. But it's also thanks to decades of stability in Asia made possible by America's forward presence in the region, by strong trade with America, and by an open

international economic system championed by the United States of America.

Cooperation between our countries is also good for the world. Along with our G–20 partners, we've moved from the brink of catastrophe to the beginning of global economic recovery. With our Security Council partners, we passed and are enforcing the strongest sanctions to date against Iran over its nuclear program. We've worked together to reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula. And most recently, we welcomed China's support for the historic referendum in Southern Sudan.

As we look to the future, what's needed, I believe, is a spirit of cooperation that is also friendly competition. In areas like those that I just mentioned, we will cooperate, forging partnerships and making progress that neither nation can achieve alone. In other areas, we'll compete: a healthy competition that spurs both countries to innovate and become even more competitive. That's the kind of relationship I see for the United States and China in the 21st century, and that's the kind of relationship that we advanced today.

I am very pleased that we've completed dozens of deals that will increase U.S. exports by more than $45 billion and also increase China's investment in the United States by several billion dollars. From machinery to software, from aviation to agriculture, these deals will support some 235,000 American jobs, and that includes many manufacturing jobs. So this is great news for America's workers.

I did also stress to President Hu that there has to be a level playing field for American companies competing in China, that trade has to be fair. So I welcomed his commitment that American companies will not be discriminated against when they compete for Chinese Government procurement contracts. And I appreciate his willingness to take new steps to combat the theft of intellectual property.

We're renewing our long-running cooperation in science and technology, which sparks advances in agriculture and industry. We're moving ahead with our U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center and joint ventures in wind power, smart grids, and cleaner coal. I believe that, as the two largest energy consumers and emitters of greenhouse gases, the United States and China have a responsibility to combat climate change by building on the progress at Copenhagen and Cancun and showing the way to a clean energy future. And President Hu indicated that he agrees with me on this issue.

We discussed China's progress in moving toward a more market-oriented economy and how we can ensure a strong and balanced global economic recovery. We agreed that in China, this means boosting domestic demand; here in the United States, it means spending less and exporting more.

I told President Hu that we welcome China's increasing the flexibility of its currency. But I also had to say that the RMB remains undervalued, that there needs to be further adjustment in the exchange rate, and that this can be a powerful tool for China boosting domestic demand and lessening the inflationary pressures in their economy. So we'll continue to look for the value of China's currency to be increasingly driven by the market, which will help ensure that no nation has an undue economic advantage.

To advance our shared security, we're expanding and deepening dialogue and cooperation between our militaries, which increases trust and reduces misunderstandings.

With regard to regional stability and security in East Asia, I stressed that the United States has a fundamental interest in maintaining freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce, respect for international law, and the peaceful resolution of differences.

I welcomed the progress that's been made on both sides of the Taiwan Strait in reducing tensions and building economic ties. And we hope this progress continues, because it's in the interest of both sides, the region, and the United States. Indeed, I reaffirmed our commitment to a "one China" policy based on the three U.S.-China communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act.

I told President Hu that we appreciated China's role in reducing tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and we agreed that North Korea

must avoid further provocations. I also said that North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile program is increasingly a direct threat to the security of the United States and our allies. We agreed that the paramount goal must be complete denuclearization of the peninsula. In that regard, the international community must continue to state clearly that North Korea's uranium enrichment program is in violation of North Korea's commitments and international obligations.

With respect to global security, I'm pleased that we're moving ahead with President Hu's commitment, at last year's nuclear security summit, for China to establish a center of excellence, which will help secure the world's vulnerable nuclear materials.

To prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, we agreed that Iran must uphold its international obligations and that the U.N. Security Council sanctions on Iran must be fully enforced. Along with our P–5-plus-1 partners, we'll continue to offer the Government of Iran the opportunity for dialogue and integration into the international community, but only if it meets its obligations.

I reaffirmed America's fundamental commitment to the universal rights of all people. That includes basic human rights like freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association and demonstration, and of religion, rights that are recognized in the Chinese Constitution. As I've said before, the United States speaks up for these freedoms and the dignity of every human being, not only because it's part of who we are as Americans, but we do so because we believe that by upholding these universal rights, all nations, including China, will ultimately be more prosperous and successful.

So today we've agreed to move ahead with our formal dialogue on human rights. We've agreed to new exchanges to advance the rule of law. And even as we, the United States, recognize that Tibet is part of the People's Republic of China, the United States continues to support further dialogue between the Government of China and the representatives of the Dalai Lama to resolve concerns and differences, including the preservation of the religious and cultural identity of the Tibetan people.

Finally, we continue to expand partnerships between our people, especially our young people. Today my wife Michelle is highlighting our efforts to increase the number of American students studying in China to 100,000. And I am very pleased that President Hu will be visiting my hometown of Chicago.

Mr. President, you are brave to visit Chicago in the middle of winter. I have warned him that the weather may not be as pleasant as it is here today. But I know that in the students and the businesspeople that you meet, you will see the extraordinary possibilities of partnership between our citizens.

So again, I believe that we've helped to lay the foundation for cooperation between the United States and China for decades to come. And Michelle and I look forward to hosting President Hu for a state dinner tonight to celebrate the deep ties between our people, as well as our shared hopes for the future.

President Hu.

President Hu. Friends from the press, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon: First of all, I want to express sincere appreciation to President Obama and the Government and people of the United States for the warm welcome accorded to me and my colleagues.

Just now I have had talks with President Obama in a candid, pragmatic, and constructive atmosphere. We had an in-depth exchange of views and reached important agreement on China-U.S. relations and major international and regional issues of shared interest. We reviewed the development of China-U.S. relations in the last 2 years. We positively assessed the progress we made in dialogue, coordination, and cooperation in various areas. The Chinese side appreciates President Obama's commitment to a positive and constructive China policy and to stable and growing China-U.S. relations since he took office.

Both President Obama and I agree that as mankind enters the second decade of the 21st century, the international situation continues to undergo profound and complex changes and there is a growing number of global challenges.

China and the United States share expanding common interests and shoulder increasing common responsibilities.

China-U.S. cooperation has great significance for our two countries and the world. The two sides should firmly adhere to the right direction of our relationship: respect each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and development interests; promote the long-term sound and steady growth of China-U.S. relations; and make even greater contributions to maintaining and promoting world peace and development.

We both agree to further push forward the positive, cooperative, and comprehensive China-U.S. relationship and commit to work together to build a China-U.S. cooperative partnership based on mutual respect and mutual benefit, so as to better benefit people in our own countries and the world over.

We both agree to strengthen exchanges and cooperation in economy and trade, energy and the environment, science and technology, infrastructure construction, culture and education, counterterrorism, nonproliferation, law enforcement, and other areas so as to achieve mutual benefit.

During my current visit to the United States, the relevant departments, institutions, and enterprises of the two countries have signed a number of cooperation agreements and reached agreement on a series of new cooperation projects. These will inject fresh momentum into our bilateral cooperation and create a great many job opportunities for both countries.

We discussed some disagreements in the economic and trade area, and we will continue to appropriately resolve these according to the principle of mutual respect and consultation on an equal footing.

The President and I agree that China and the United States need to establish a pattern of high-level exchanges featuring in-depth communication and candid dialogue. President Obama and I will stay in close contact through meetings, telephone calls, and letters. The two sides believe that the expansion of exchanges and cooperation between our militaries contribute to deepening mutual trust between our two countries and to the growth of our overall relationship.

We also agree to encourage all sectors of our society to carry out various forms of exchange activities. In particular, we have high hopes on the young people, hoping that they will better understand each other's country and be more deeply involved in the people-to-people exchanges between our two countries.

President Obama and I exchanged views on the international economic situation. We believe the world economy is slowly recovering from the international financial crisis, but there are still a fair amount of unstable factors and uncertainties. Both sides agree to strengthen microeconomic policy coordination and actively pursue opportunities for greater cooperation in this process.

The two sides support the G–20 playing a bigger role in international economic and financial affairs. We agree to push forward reform of the international financial system and improve global economic governance. We champion free trade and oppose protectionism, and we hope the Doha round of negotiations can make early and substantive progress.

President Obama and I exchanged views on major international and regional issues, including the situation on the Korean Peninsula, the Iranian nuclear issue, climate change, and others. We agree to strengthen consultation and coordination on major issues that concern peace and development in the Asia-Pacific region and in the world.

China and the United States will enhance coordination and cooperation and work with the relevant parties to maintain peace and stability on the peninsula, promote denuclearization of the peninsula, and achieve lasting peace and security in Northeast Asia.

We will work with the United States and other countries to effectively address global challenges, such as meeting the climate challenge, terrorism, transnational crime, energy and resource security, food security, public health security, and serious natural disasters, so as to forge a bright future for the world.

I stated to the President that China is firmly committed to the path of peaceful development and a win-win strategy of opening up. China is a friend and partner of all countries, and China's development is an opportunity for the world.

That's all. Thank you.

White House Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs. Ben Feller with the Associated Press.

U.S. Ambassador to China Jon H. Huntsman, Jr./Human Rights in China/China-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you very much. I'd like to address both leaders, if I may.

President Obama, you've covered the broad scope of this relationship, but I'd like to follow up specifically on your comments about human rights. Can you explain to the American people how the United States can be so allied with a country that is known for treating its people so poorly, for using censorship and force to repress its people? Do you have any confidence that as a result of this visit that will change?

And if I may, on an unrelated topic, I'd like to know what you make of the speculation that the gentleman in front of me, Ambassador Huntsman, might run against you in 2012.

And, President Hu, I'd like to give you a chance to respond to this issue of human rights. How do you justify China's record, and do you think that's any of the business of the American people?

President Obama. Well, first of all, let me just say, I think Ambassador Huntsman has done an outstanding job as Ambassador for the United States to China. He is a Mandarin speaker. He has brought enormous skill, dedication, and talent to the job. And the fact that he comes from a different party, I think, is a strength, not a weakness, because it indicates the degree to which both he and I believe that partisanship ends at the water's edge and that we work together to advocate on behalf of our country.

So I couldn't be happier with the Ambassador's service. And I'm sure he will be very successful in whatever endeavors he chooses in the future. [*Laughter*] And I'm sure that him having worked so well with me will be a great asset in any Republican primary. [*Laughter*]

Let me address the other issue, and a very serious issue. China has a different political system than we do. China's at a different stage of development than we are. We come from very different cultures and—with very different histories. But as I've said before, and I repeated to President Hu, we have some core views as Americans about the universality of certain rights—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly—that we think are very important and that transcend cultures.

I have been very candid with President Hu about these issues. Occasionally, they are a source of tension between our two governments. But what I believe is the same thing that I think seven previous Presidents have believed, which is, is that we can engage and discuss these issues in a frank and candid way, focus on those areas where we agree, while acknowledging there are going to be areas where we disagree.

And I want to suggest that there has been an evolution in China over the last 30 years since the first normalization of relations between the United States and China. And my expectation is that 30 years from now, we will have seen further evolution and further change.

And so what my approach will continue to be is to celebrate the incredible accomplishments of the Chinese people, their extraordinary civilization; the multiple areas in which we have to cooperate, not only for the sakes of our countries, but also for the sakes of the world; to acknowledge that we're going to have certain differences and to be honest, as I think any partner needs to be honest, when it comes to how we view many of these issues. And so that frank and candid assessment on our part will continue. But that doesn't prevent us from cooperating in these other critical areas.

[*At this point, there was a pause as the interpreter began to translate President Obama's answer into Chinese.*]

Interpreter. The translator is now translating the question back into Chinese.

[*The interpreter continued to translate the question.*]

President Obama. I apologize. I thought we had simultaneous translation there. So I would have broken up the answer into smaller bites.

[*A spokesperson for President Hu called on a reporter in Chinese, and no translation was provided. The reporter then began to ask a question in Chinese, again with no translation.*]

President Obama. I'm sorry, I'm getting it in Chinese.

[*The interpreter translated the question.*]

China's Economic Development and Growth

Q. I'm from China Central Television—[*inaudible*]—you know that there is an old saying in China that a good relationship between the two peoples holds the key to a sound relationship between states. We know that to further strengthen the public support for the development of this relationship is also very important to the sustained, sound, and steady growth of our relations. So, President Hu Jintao, I would like to ask you the question that, what do you think that the two countries need to do to further increase the friendship and mutual understanding between the Chinese and American peoples?

At the same time, we have also noted that the U.S. side has been saying that the United States is willing to see a stronger and more prosperous China. So I would like to ask President Obama that, deep in your hearts, do you really think that you can live comfortably with a constantly growing China? And also this question that, what do you think that China's development really mean to the United States?

President Hu. I would like to take this—[*inaudible*]—question from the lady journalist. I think that to—the exchanges between our two peoples represent the basis and the driving force behind the growth of our relationship. Ever since the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries, we have seen more robust exchanges between our two peoples. And such exchanges have also helped promote the steady growth of our relationship.

The statistics I have show that each year we have about 3 million people traveling between our two countries. In other words, on every single day, about seven to eight thousand people will be traveling between China and the United States. This is something hardly conceivable 32 years ago, when we first established the diplomatic ties.

In addition, we have also seen very broad-ranging development of the exchanges at subnational level. So far, our two countries have already established sister relationships between 36 Provinces and States, and we have also developed 161 pairs of sister cities between our two countries. The Chinese Government is supportive of the friendly exchanges between our two peoples, and we have been creating all kinds of conditions to expand the friendly exchanges between the American and the Chinese peoples.

During this visit, President Obama and I reached an agreement that both sides will take positive steps to further increase the people-to-people exchanges. On the one hand, we will encourage the young people in our two countries to go to each other's countries to pursue further education and to learn more about each other. And at the same time, we have also decided to put in place a dialogue and exchange mechanisms between different Chinese and American Provinces and States. Besides, we are also going to further expand cultural exchanges and develop tourism. We're going to use a variety of means to further increase people-to-people exchanges.

I would like to particularly stress here that the young people holds the future of this relationship. It is extremely important to increase the exchanges between the young people in our two countries. Through such exchanges, I hope that our friendship can be furthered. And I also hope that they, in the future, can serve as ambassadors of good will for our two countries and they can make even more positive contribution to the development of a cooperative

partnership based on mutual respect and mutual benefit.

President Obama. Let me respond briefly to your question. I absolutely believe that China's peaceful rise is good for the world and it's good for America. First of all, it's good for humanitarian reasons. The United States has an interest in seeing hundreds of millions of people lifted out of poverty. We believe part of justice and part of human rights is people being able to make a living and having enough to eat and having shelter and having electricity.

And the development of China has brought unprecedented economic growth to more people more quickly than just about any time in history. And that's a positive good for the world, and it's something that the United States very much appreciates and respects.

We also think that China's rise offers enormous economic opportunity. We want to sell you all kinds of stuff. [*Laughter*] We want to sell you planes. We want to sell you cars. We want to sell you software. And as President Hu and his Government refocuses the economy on expanding domestic demand, that offers opportunities for U.S. businesses, which ultimately translates into U.S. jobs.

It also means that as China's standards of livings rise, they have more purchasing power. I mean, something that I think we have to remind ourselves is that the United States economy is still three times larger than China's, despite having one-quarter of the population. So per-capita income is still very different between the two countries. And as China's per-capita income rises, that offers an opportunity for increased trade and commercial ties that benefit both countries.

And finally, China's rise is potentially good for the world. To the extent that China is functioning as a responsible actor on the world stage, to the extent that we have a partner in ensuring that weapons of mass destruction don't fall into the hands of terrorists or rogue states, to the extent that we have a partner in dealing with regional hotspots, to the extent that we have a partner in addressing issues like climate change or pandemic, to the extent that we have a partner who is helping poorer countries in Asia or in Africa further develop so that they too can be part of the world economy, that is something that can help create stability and order and prosperity around the world. And that's the kind of partnership that we'd like to see. And it's more likely to come if China feels secure and itself is doing well economically, they're more likely to be an effective partner with us on the world stage.

White House Press Secretary Gibbs. Hans Nichols from Bloomberg.

Human Rights in China

Q. Thank you, Mr. President, President Hu. President Obama, with your respect and permission, because of the translation questions, could I direct one first to President Hu?

President Obama. Of course.

Q. Thank you.

President Hu, first off, my colleague asked you a question about human rights, which you did not answer. I was wondering if we could get an answer to that question.

And then also, on Capitol Hill, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, House Speaker John Boehner are not attending tonight's state dinner. Many on Capitol Hill see China as an economic threat. What can you do to allay their fears?

President Hu. First, I would like to clarify, because of the technical translation and interpretation problem, I did not hear the question about the human rights. What I know was that he was asking a question directed at President Obama. As you raise this question, and I heard the question properly, certainly I'm in a position to answer that question.

President Obama and I already met eight times. Each time we met, we had an in-depth exchange of views in a candid manner on issues of shared interest and on issues toward each other's concerns. And on the issues we have covered, we also discussed human rights.

China is always committed to the protection and promotion of human rights. And in the course of human rights, China has also made enormous progress, recognized widely in the world.

China recognizes and also respects the universality of human rights. And at the same time, we do believe that we also need to take into account the different and national circumstances when it comes to the universal value of human rights.

China is a developing country with a huge population, and also a developing country in a crucial stage of reform. In this context, China still faces many challenges in economic and social development. And a lot still needs to be done in China in terms of human rights.

We will continue our efforts to improve the lives of the Chinese people, and we will continue our efforts to promote democracy and the rule of law in our country. At the same time, we are also willing to continue to have exchanges and dialogue with other countries in terms of human rights and we are also going to—we are also willing to learn from each other in terms of the good practices.

As President Obama rightly put it just now, though there are disagreements between China and the United States on the issue of human rights, China is willing to engage in dialogue and exchanges with the United States on the basis of mutual respect and the principle of noninterference in each other's internal affairs. In this way, we'll be able to further increase our mutual understanding, reduce our disagreements, and expand our common ground.

As for the latter question about the attendance at the state dinner by some Congress people, as to who will attend and who will not attend and for what reasons, I think President Obama is certainly in a better position to answer that question.

President Obama. Is that the question you want to pose to me, Hans? [*Laughter*]

Q. [*Inaudible*]

President Obama. You get one.

Trade/U.S. Economic Competitiveness/Chinese Monetary Policy

Q. I have a question then about exports and jobs.

President Obama. Okay.

Q. You've just spoken about some of the deals that you've sealed here, about the importance of exports—your own goal of doubling exports to your job strategy. At the same time, you said there needs to be further adjustment in the exchange rate and the RMB is undervalued. To what extent does China's depressing of its currency affect your ability to grow jobs in this country and lower the unemployment rate?

President Obama. Well, I think that it is important for us to look at the entire economic relationship, and the currency issue is one part of it.

The first time I met President Hu was in April of 2009. And this was the first G–20 summit that I attended, when we were in the midst of the worst financial crisis that we had experienced since the 1930s. And even as we were trying to stabilize the financial system, what was absolutely clear was that we couldn't go back to a system in which the United States was borrowing massively, consuming massively, but not producing and selling to the rest of the world, creating these huge imbalances that helped contribute to the crisis. And that's why we pushed and why the G–20 adopted a framework that called for rebalancing the world economy.

Now, that gives us some responsibilities. We've got to save more in this country. We've got to cut back on these huge levels of debt both in the private sector, but also in the public sector. It also means that there are structural reforms that we have to undergo to make ourselves more competitive in the world economy. So making sure that we have the best education system in the world, that we're producing more engineers than lawyers; making sure that we have a handle on our fiscal problems; making sure that we've got a world-class infrastructure: Those are all important parts of us being competitive and being able to export.

It does also mean, though, that we have a level playing field when it comes to our trading partners. And so with respect to China, what President Hu and myself and our delegations have discussed is how do we make sure that, in fact, our trading relationship is fair and a win-win situation as opposed to a win-lose situation.

Some of that has to do with issues completely unrelated to currency. For example, we're making progress on making sure that the Government procurement process in China is open and fair to American businesses. And we've made progress as a consequence of this state visit.

Some of it has to do with intellectual property protection. So we were just in a meeting with business leaders, and Steve Ballmer of Microsoft pointed out that their estimate is that only 1 customer in every 10 of their products is actually paying for it in China. And so can we get better enforcement, since that is an area where America excels—intellectual property and high-value-added products and services.

And the Chinese Government has, to its credit, taken steps to better enforce intellectual property. We've got further agreement as a consequence of this state visit. And I think President Hu would acknowledge that more needs to be done.

But the currency issue is a part of the problem. The RMB is undervalued. The Chinese Government has intervened very forcefully in the currency markets. They've spent $200 billion just recently, and that's an indication of the degree to which it's still undervalued.

President Hu has indicated he's committed to moving towards a market-based system. And there has been movement, but it's not as fast as we want. And what I've said to President Hu—and I firmly believe this—is not only will U.S. businesses be able to export more to China if we have a market-based currency, but it will also be good for China and President Hu's agenda of expanding domestic demand. Because if the RMB is worth more, that means they can buy more products and services, and that will contribute to China having greater purchasing power and a higher standard of living.

So this is something that can be a win-win. President Hu's concerned understandably about how rapid this transition takes and the disruptions that may occur in its export sector. But I'm confident that it's the right thing to do, and my hope and expectation is, is that President Hu's resolve will lead to a fully market-based currency program that will allow more effective trade between our two countries.

Spokesman for President Hu. [*Inaudible*]—from the Xinhua News Agency.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. I'm from Xinhua News Agency. Because of the on-and-off interpretation from the simultaneous booths, so I would like to ask the Chinese consecutive interpreter to interpret my two questions correctly and accurately. [*Laughter*]

My first question for President Obama: Many people do believe that the biggest problem in this relationship is the lack of strategic mutual trust. Do you agree with this view? And how do you think that the two sides should enhance their strategic mutual trust? And how do you think that the two sides should appropriately manage their differences and expand their common interests?

My second question is for President Hu Jintao. We've noted that both the Chinese and American leaders have on various occasions stressed the fact that the influence and significance of the China-U.S. relationship have gone far beyond the bilateral dimension. China and the United States share broad common interests and shoulder important common responsibilities in addressing a variety of regional and the global issues. So my question is that how do you think that the China and the United States can step up their cooperation in a joint endeavor to tackle the increasing number of global issues?

President Obama. Certainly, the more that we can build a baseline of trust—as you called it, "strategic mutual trust"—the more likely we are able to solve the friction or irritants that exist in a relationship between any two countries in a more constructive way, which is why I think it's so important that not only governments, but people in both countries understand the challenges that each country faces and not view every issue through the lens of rivalry.

For example, I know that in China, many believe that somehow the United States is

interested in containing China's rise. As I indicated in the answer that I gave a previous questioner, we welcome China's rise. We just want to make sure that that rise is done—that that rise occurs in a way that reinforces international norms and international rules and enhances security and peace, as opposed to it being a source of conflict either in the region or around the world.

And these security and economic dialogues that we've established are precisely designed to lessen suspicions, to enhance mutual understanding. The more we understand each other's challenges, the more we can take advantage of opportunities.

President Hu. As the journalist who raised that question said that in today's world mankind faces more and more global challenges. And I would like to stress here that no country can remain unscathed in face of so many global challenges. And no country can singlehandedly tackle global challenges.

For example, in the field of fighting terrorism, upholding the security of humanity, or in tackling the international financial crisis, promoting the growth of the world economy in addressing regional hotspots, fighting transnational crimes, fighting piracy, and preventing and treating communicable diseases—in all these areas, countries need to work together to meet the challenge.

China is the biggest developing country, and the United States the biggest developed country. In this context, it is ultimately necessary for China and the United States to strengthen their cooperation to meet such challenges.

How can China and the U.S. do a better job in working together to meet global challenges? I think there are three points I would like to make, and these three points deserve our serious attention and consideration.

Number one, that our two sides have acted in the spirit of cooperation, as if we were in the same boat and we should row in the same direction, when we tackled previous international challenges. And I think we need to keep up the spirit in future, as we tackle challenges.

Number two, we need to increase our communication and coordination. And number three, we need to respect and accommodate each other's interests and concerns. I'm convinced that as long as our two sides continue to act in this spirit and as long as we continue to work together with other countries concerned, we will be able to engage in cooperation in an even broader range of areas to the benefit of world peace and development.

President Obama. All right, everybody. Thank you so much for your patience, due to the technical difficulties.

President Hu, once again, we appreciate your visit. We appreciate the dialogue. And we are looking forward to having dinner with you later this evening.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:27 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama; and Steve Ballmer, chief executive officer, Microsoft Corp. President Hu, his spokesman, and two reporters spoke in Chinese, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on Senator Joseph I. Lieberman's Decision Not To Seek Reelection

January 19, 2011

I want to congratulate Senator Joe Lieberman on an extraordinary career in public service. Joe has spent four decades fighting for what he believes in on behalf of the people of Connecticut. From cracking down on polluters and deadbeat dads as Connecticut's attorney general to his years of work defending our Nation's security on the Armed Services and Homeland Security Committees to his relentless efforts in recent months to repeal "don't ask, don't tell," his work has touched countless lives in his home State and across the

country. Even if we don't always see eye to eye, I always know Joe is coming from a place of principle. I know he will carry with him that integrity and dedication to his remaining work in the Senate and to whatever he chooses to do next.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Hu Jintao of China
January 19, 2011

President Obama. Good evening, everybody. Please have a seat. On behalf of Michelle and myself, welcome to the White House. And thank you for joining us as we host President Hu and the Chinese delegation and as we pay tribute to the bonds between two great nations and two proud peoples.

There are too many distinguished guests to mention all of you tonight. But I do want to acknowledge a few who have championed relations between our nations: First of all, President Jimmy Carter and his wonderful wife Rosalynn Carter are here, as well as President Bill Clinton and my outstanding Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton.

President Hu, we have met today in a spirit of mutual respect: the United States, the oldest democracy in the world, and China, one of the oldest civilizations in the world. And while it's easy to focus on our differences of culture and perspective, let us never forget the values that our people share: a reverence for family; the belief that, with education and hard work and with sacrifice, the future is what we make it; and most of all, the desire to give our children a better life.

Let's also never forget that throughout our history, our people have worked together for mutual progress. We've traded together for more than 200 years. We stood together in the Second World War. Chinese immigrants and Chinese Americans have helped to build America, including many who join us here tonight.

The Chinese and American people work together and create new opportunities together every single day. Mr. President, and today we've shown that our governments can work together as well, for our mutual benefit. And that includes this bit of news: Under a new agreement, our National Zoo will continue to dazzle children and visitors with the beloved giant pandas.

I'm told that there is a Chinese proverb that says: "If you want 1 year of prosperity, then grow grain. If you want 10 years of prosperity, then grow trees. But if you want 100 years of prosperity, then you grow people."

And so I propose a toast.

To our people, the citizens of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America: May they grow together in friendship, may they prosper together in peace, and may they realize their dream of the future for themselves, for their children, and for their grandchildren.

[*At this point, President Obama offered a toast.*]

President Obama. Cheers. *Ganbei*.

President Hu. President Obama and Mrs. Obama, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends: Good evening. I am delighted to once again come to the United States and pay a state visit at the invitation of President Obama.

Since setting foot on this beautiful land, we have received the gracious hospitality of the U.S. Government and people. This evening President Obama is hosting this welcoming dinner for us and has just made warm remarks. On behalf of my colleagues and in my own name, I want to express heartfelt thanks to President and Mrs. Obama and other American friends present today.

I also wish to convey through you the best wishes of the Chinese people to the friendly American people and extend cordial greetings to people from various sectors of the United States who have given care and support to the growth of China-U.S. relations.

The purpose of my visit is to increase mutual trust, enhance friendship, deepen cooperation,

and advance the positive, cooperative, and comprehensive China-U.S. relationship for the 21st century.

In recent years, particularly over the past 2 years since President Obama took office, China-U.S. relations have made strong headway, thanks to the joint efforts of both sides.

We have increased exchanges in cooperation in a wide range of areas, maintained close communication and coordination on major international and regional issues, and played a positive role in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region and the whole world.

Under the current circumstances, our two countries share broader common interests, shoulder bigger common responsibilities, and face more severe common challenges than at any time in history. As a result, it is more important than never for us to maintain the long-term, sound, and steady growth of our bilateral relations. This is the reality we face, and it should be recognized by both sides.

This morning President Obama and I had an in-depth exchange of views on China-U.S. relations and international and regional issues of common interest. And we reached important agreement. We agreed that our two countries should increase contacts at the top and other levels, strengthen strategic mutual trust through dialogue and communication, intensify exchanges and cooperation in all fields, and step up communication and coordination on international and regional issues.

We agreed that the two countries should respect each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and the development interests, properly handle differences and frictions, and work together to build a China-U.S. cooperative partnership based on mutual respect and mutual benefit.

China-U.S. relations have traveled a extraordinary journey in the past 32 years since the establishment of diplomatic ties. A review of the history of our relations shows that we have far more common interests than differences, and cooperation for mutual benefit has always being the mainstream of our relations. This has reinforced our confidence in further pushing forward our relationship.

Today, both China and the United States are confronted with the arduous task of sustaining steady economic growth and achieving economic transformation. And we both need to tackle the various challenges brought by economic globalization. This has added to our need and desire to enhance cooperation.

We should pursue our relations with a stronger conviction, a broader vision, and more proactive approach. We need to take solid steps and make pioneering efforts to fully tap the potential of cooperation and strive for new progress in China-U.S. relations.

I am confident that with joint efforts, China-U.S. cooperative partnership will yield bountiful fruits for the greater benefit of our people and make new and bigger contribution to the noble cause of world peace and development.

[*President Hu offered a toast.*]

President Hu. To the health of President and Mrs. Obama, to the health of all friends present here, to the stronger friendship between the people of China and the United States, and to the steady growth of China-U.S. relations.

Cheers.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:51 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. President Hu spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Honoring the 50th Anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's Inauguration

January 20, 2011

To Caroline and the Kennedy family, to all the Members of Congress and distinguished guests here tonight, it is an extraordinary pleasure to join you to mark the 50th anniversary of

John F. Kennedy's Inauguration. And I can't think of a better place to do it than here, in a living memorial that reflects not only his love of the arts, but also his recognition of how the arts can help sustain our national strength.

Now, we mark this anniversary with a measure of sadness, as we remember the extraordinary life of Sargent Shriver, a man who embodied the spirit of the New Frontier as well as anybody. When a person passes away, there's often an urge to define their legacy and find a way in which it will endure. In the case of Sarge, that is not hard to do. His legacy is written in the villages around the world that have clean water or a new school through the Peace Corps. It's written into the lives of all the children in our own country whose fortunes have been lifted through Head Start. And it will endure in the work of his children, who are living out his legacy of service, and our thoughts and prayers are with them tonight.

Now, one of the remarkable aspects in commemorating the JFK Inauguration, in remembering those who were part of his team, like Sargent Shriver, who would help bring Kennedy's soaring vision to life, is that none of it feels dated. Even now, one half century later, there's something about that day—January 20, 1961—that feels immediate, feels new and urgent and exciting, despite the graininess of the 16-millimeter news reels that recorded it for posterity.

There he is, the handsome Bostonian, summoning a generation to service and a nation to greatness in a speech that would become part of the American canon. And there's the crowd, bundled up for the cold, making their way through streets white with snow, full of expectation; a nation feeling young again, its mood brightened by the promise of a new decade.

Now, I confess, I don't have my own memories of that day. [*Laughter*] I wasn't born until later that year. [*Laughter*] What I know of that day and the 1,000 days that followed, what I know of President Kennedy, came from a mother and grandparents who adored him, from books I read and classes I took, from growing up in a country still mourning its beloved leader, whose name was spoken with reverence. And I know him through the legacy of his children and his brother Teddy, who became extraordinarily dear friends of mine.

But I know him, John F. Kennedy, less as a man than as an icon, as a larger-than-life figure who graced this Earth for one brief and shining moment. But part of this—the function of this event, on this day, we must remember him as he was: as a father who loved his children, as a friend who lived life fully, as a noble public servant who wanted to make a difference.

A quick wit with a light touch, he was dealt, in many ways, a fortunate hand at birth. Attending one event, early in his career, where every speaker before him pompously claimed humble roots—things haven't changed that much—[*laughter*]—John Kennedy confessed, when he took the podium, that he was, and I quote, "the only fellow here who didn't come up the hard way." [*Laughter*]

And yet it cannot be said that John F. Kennedy lived an easy life. He lost an older brother in the war, a sister shortly thereafter. He nearly lost his own life too when a Japanese gunship cut his PT boat in half, casting him into the water, from which he swam a crewmate to safety. Another sister struggled with a severe mental handicap. His own health was so poor that priests pronounced his last rites on several different occasions. And he endured the personal prejudice and political poison of anti-Catholic fervor.

And there is surely a possibility, under such circumstances, that a person will retreat from the world; that a person, particularly one born to wealth, will seek a life of luxury and ease; that a person, confronted by the coldness of chance, will become bitter or cynical or small. It has happened to others.

But that is not the life that John F. Kennedy chose. As he famously said at a press conference, "Life is unfair." We can't choose the lots we are given in life, but we can choose how to live that life. John F. Kennedy chose a life in the arena, full of confidence that our country could surmount any obstacle, as he'd seen it do himself. He chose a life of leadership, fired not by naive optimism, but committed realism: "idealism," as his wife Jackie put it, "without

illusions." That is the idealism—soaring, but sober—that inspired the country and the world one half century ago.

I can only imagine how he must have felt, entering the Oval Office in turbulent times. [*Laughter*] The Soviet Premier, Khrushchev, had threatened to "bury" America just a few years before. Wars of liberation, as they were called, were being waged around the globe, from Laos and Vietnam to Congo and Cuba, just 90 miles from our shore. At home, a young preacher's cause was gaining traction across a segregated land.

In this volatile America, this tinderbox of a world, President Kennedy led with a steadying hand: defusing the most perilous crisis of the cold war without firing a single shot, enforcing the rights of young Black men and women to attend the university of their choice, launching a corps of volunteers as ambassadors for peace in distant centers of the globe, setting America's sights on the Moon, unwilling to lose the space race in the wake of Sputnik.

We know the moonshot story. It's a familiar one, often invoked to make the case for an ambitious idea. But it's easy to lose sight of just how improbable it seemed in May of 1961. When President Kennedy proposed going to the Moon, America had just 15 minutes of manned flight experience in space. NASA had neither a plan nor a shuttle for making a lunar voyage. [*Laughter*] Its own engineers had taken out the slide rules, and they were deeply skeptical of the mission. [*Laughter*]

The science just wasn't there. President Kennedy understood that. But he also knew something else. He knew that we, as a people, can do big things. We can reach great heights. We can rise to any challenge, so long as we're willing to ask what we can do for our country, so long as we're willing to take America's destiny into our own hands. What President Kennedy understood was the character of the people he led: our resilience, our fearlessness, our distinctly American ability, revealed time and again throughout history, to defy the odds, to fashion our future, to make the world anew.

The world is very different now than it was in 1961. We face new trials and new uncertainties, from our economy to our security. We have a politics that can often seem too small for the hardships at hand. So meeting these tests won't be easy. But we cannot forget: We are the heirs of this President, who showed us what is possible. Because of his vision, more people prospered, more people served, our Union was made more perfect. Because of that vision, I can stand here tonight as President of the United States.

So John F. Kennedy captured that American spirit that not only put a man on the Moon, but saved a continent from tyranny and overcame a Great Depression, that forged, from 13 Colonies, the last, best hope on Earth. And if we can hold onto that spirit today, I know that our generation will answer its call as ably as earlier ones did before us.

In December 1962, President Kennedy was asked by the Saturday Evening Post to submit his favorite quotation. A student not only of history, but also of literature, he chose a passage written by the poet Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., father of the Supreme Court Justice. Mr. Holmes wrote: "I find the great things in this world—is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving: to reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor."

That, I think, captures well the daring, graceful spirit of the unfinished life we celebrate today, a life that inspires us and lights our way as we sail on to the new frontiers of our own time. Thank you. God bless you, and may God bless this country that we love.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:10 p.m. at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Robert S. Shriver III, Timothy P. Shriver, Mark K. Shriver, Anthony P.K. Shriver, and Maria Shriver, children of R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.

Remarks at the General Electric Plant in Schenectady, New York
January 21, 2011

Hello, hello! Hello, Schenectady! It is good to be in New York. Now, let me just begin—if I'm not mistaken, Governor Cuomo, who is going to be an outstanding Governor, he tried to give me a Jets hat. [*Laughter*] I had to refuse it. I had Secret Service confiscate it. [*Laughter*] But I will say both the Jets and the Bears, I think, are slight underdogs, so we're going to be rooting for the underdogs on Sunday.

In addition to Governor Cuomo, I just want to acknowledge Lieutenant Governor Bob Duffy is here. Two great friends of mine and great champions for New York in the United States Senate, Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand are here. Members of the congressional delegation from up this way, Paul Tonko, Chris Gibson, and Richard Hanna are all here.

Attorney General Eric Schneiderman is here. The outstanding mayor of Schenectady, who flew up with me because we had an event down at the White House for mayors, and he was on Marine One and Air Force One, and he was—he looked like he was having a pretty good time—[*laughter*]—Brian Stratton is here. And from Albany, Mayor Jerry Jennings is here. Thank you.

Now, Jeff, thank you for the outstanding introduction, and thank you GE. It is great to be here. I just had a chance to see some of the high-tech steam turbines and all kinds of fancy stuff that's being made here, being manufactured here at this plant. And it is unbelievably impressive, and it's part of a proud tradition, because GE has been producing turbines and generators here in Schenectady for more than a century.

Now, a lot has changed since those early days. We've seen technologies transform the ways we work and the ways we communicate with one another. We've seen our economy transformed by rising competition from around the globe. And over the years, in the wake of these shifts, upstate New York and places like it have seen more than their fair share of hard times.

But what has never changed—we see it right here at this plant, we see it right here at GE—is that America is still home to the most creative and most innovative businesses in the world. We've got the most productive workers in the world. America is home to inventors and dreamers and builders and creators. All of you represent people who each and every day are pioneering the technologies and discoveries that not only improve our lives, but they drive our economy.

Across the country, there are entrepreneurs opening businesses. There are researchers testing new medical treatments. There are engineers pushing the limits of design and the programmers poring over lines of code. And there are workers like you on assembly lines all across the country, eager to create some of the best products the world has ever seen. There are students training to take new jobs by their side.

In this community, GE is building one of the world's most sophisticated manufacturing facilities to produce state-of-the-art batteries. Last year, you opened the headquarters of your renewable energy operations, and you created 650 jobs on this campus.

So our challenge, especially as we continue to fight our way back from the worst recession in our lifetimes, is to harness this spirit, to harness this potential, the potential that all of you represent.

Our challenge is to do everything we can to make it easier for folks to bring products to market and to start and expand new businesses and to grow and hire new workers. I want plants like this all across America. You guys are a model of what's possible.

And that's why, as part of the tax cut compromise that I signed at the end of the year, we provided incentives for businesses to make new capital investments. And in fact, GE is investing $13 million in advanced manufacturing at this plant, taking advantage of some of these tax breaks.

We also extended a program that GE says its customers have used to invest $6 billion in clean energy production across this country, driving demand for the company's wind turbines. And I saw one of those big turbines on the way in. So we know we can compete not just in the industries of the past, but also in the industries of the future.

But in an ever-shrinking world, our success in these efforts will be determined not only by what we build in Schenectady, but also what we can sell in Shanghai. For America to compete around the world, we need to export more goods around the world. That's where the customers are. It's that simple.

And as I was walking through the plant, you guys had put up some handy signs so I knew what I was looking at. [*Laughter*] And I noticed on all of them they said, this is going to Kuwait, this is going to India, this is going to Saudi Arabia. That's where the customers are, and we want to sell them products made here in America. That's why I met with Chinese leaders this week, and Jeff joined me at the state dinner.

During those meetings, we struck a deal to open Chinese markets to our products. They're selling here, and that's fine. But we want to sell there. We want to open up their markets so that we got two-way trade, not just one-way trade.

So the deals we struck are going to mean more than $45 billion in new business for American companies—$45 billion. That translates into 235,000 new jobs for American workers.

And that's also why I fought hard to negotiate a new trade deal with South Korea that will support more than 70,000 American jobs. That's why I traveled to India a few months ago—and Jeff was there with us—where our businesses were able to reach agreement to export $10 billion in goods and services to India. And that's going to lead to another 50,000 jobs here in the United States.

Part of the reason I wanted to come to this plant is because this plant is what that trip was all about. As part of the deal we struck in India, GE is going sell advanced turbines—the ones you guys make—to generate power at a plant in Samalkot, India—Samalkot, India. Most of you hadn't heard of Samalkot—[*laughter*]—but now you need to know about it, because you're going to be selling to Samalkot, India. And that new business halfway around the world is going to help support more than 1,200 manufacturing jobs and more than 400 engineering jobs right here in this community, because of that sale.

So it's a perfect example of why promoting exports is so important. That's why I've set a goal of doubling American exports within 5 years. And we're on track to do it. We're already up 18 percent, and we're just going to keep on going, because we're going to sell more and more stuff all around the world.

When a company sells products overseas, it leads to hiring on our shores. The deal in Samalkot means jobs in Schenectady. That's how we accelerate growth. That's how we create opportunities for our people. This is how we go from an economy that was powered by what we borrow and what we consume; that's what happened over the last 10 years. What was driving our economy was we were spending a lot on credit cards. Everybody was borrowing a lot. The Chinese were selling a lot to us. Folks were selling a lot to us from all over the world. We've got to reverse that. We want an economy that's fueled by what we invent and what we build. We're going back to Thomas Edison's principles. We're going to build stuff and invent stuff.

Now, nobody understands this better than Jeff Immelt. He understands what it takes for America to compete in the global economy. As he mentioned, I've appreciated his wisdom during these past 2 years. We had a difficult, difficult crisis on our hands. It was a few days after I took office that I assembled a group of business leaders, including Jeff, to form a new advisory board, because at that time the economy was in a freefall, and we were facing the prospects of another Great Depression, with ripple effects all around the world. It wasn't just the United States. The entire world economy was contracting. And such—at such a dangerous moment, it was essential that we heard

voices and ideas from business leaders and from experts who weren't part of the usual Washington crowd.

And I tasked Jeff and the other advisers with one mission: help to steer our Nation from deep recession into recovery, help take the economy from one that's shrinking to one that's growing. And over the past 2 years, I've been very grateful for their advice.

And I especially want to commend the man who chaired the panel, one of the Nation's preeminent economists, the former head of the Federal Reserve, Paul Volcker, because he offered unvarnished advice, and he wasn't afraid to counter the conventional wisdom. He did a great service to this country.

In fact, it was 6 months ago today that I signed into law a set of financial reforms to protect consumers and prevent future financial crises and put an end to taxpayer-funded bailouts, and that's an achievement in which Paul Volcker was instrumental. So we're very proud of him for that work.

Now, 2 years later, though, we're in a different place. In part because of the economic plan that my recovery board helped shape, the economy is now growing again. Over the last year, businesses have added more than a million jobs. The pace of hiring and growth is picking up, and that's encouraging news. But at the same time, while businesses are adding jobs, millions of people are still out there looking for work. And even here in Schenectady, as well as GE is doing, I know everybody here knows a neighbor or friend or relative who's still out of work. So it's not—it's a great thing that the economy is growing, but it's not growing fast enough yet to make up for the damage that was done by the recession.

The past 2 years were about pulling our economy back from the brink. The next 2 years, our job now, is putting our economy into overdrive. Our job is to do everything we can to ensure that businesses can take root and folks can find good jobs and America is leading the global competition that will determine our success in the 21st century.

And so now, to help fulfill this new mission, I'm assembling a new group of business leaders and outside advisers. And I am so proud and pleased that Jeff has agreed to chair this panel—my Council on Jobs and Competitiveness—because we think GE has something to teach businesses all across America.

Now, I hope you don't mind, I'm going to brag about your boss for a second here. Jeff is somebody who brings a wealth of experience to the table. He is one of the Nation's most respected and admired business leaders, and that's a reputation he earned over 10 years at the helm of this company. In the coming days, we'll be announcing the business leaders, the labor leaders, the economists, and others who will join with Jeff to help guide us into that overdrive mode.

I know this Council will be an important asset as we seek to do everything we can to spur hiring and ensure our Nation can compete with anybody on the planet. That means spurring innovation in growing industries like clean energy manufacturing, the kind of stuff that's being done right here at this plant, ensuring our economy isn't held back by crumbling roads and broken-down infrastructure.

It means educating and training our people. I just had a chance to meet one of the guys here at the plant who had been trained at Hudson Valley, which I had an opportunity to visit a while back. And that's an example of the kind of partnerships that we've got to duplicate all across the country.

Schenectady offers that kind of example. Hudson Valley Community College created a program so students could earn a paycheck and have their tuition covered while training for jobs at this plant. That's helping folks find good work, it's helping GE fill high-skill positions, it's making this whole region more competitive.

So ultimately, winning this global competition comes down to living up to the promise of places like this. Here in Schenectady, you're heirs to a great tradition of innovation and enterprise, the pioneering work of Edison that made the entire modern age possible: the tungsten filaments that still light our homes, the X-rays that diagnose disease, now the advanced batteries and renewable energy

sources that hold so much promise for the future.

In these pioneering efforts, we see what America is all about. We see what has in our past allowed us to not only weather rough storms, but reach brighter days. And it's got to remind us that we've got those same strengths. This is America. We still have that spirit of invention and that sense of optimism, that belief that if we work hard and we give it our all, that anything is possible in this country.

The future belongs to us. And you at this plant, you are showing us the way forward. So thank you so much, everybody. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:03 p.m.

The President's Weekly Address
January 22, 2011

Here's the truth about today's economy: If we're serious about fighting for American jobs and American businesses, one of the most important things we can do is open up more markets to American goods around the world.

That's why I met with China's President Hu Jintao at the White House this past week. We're now exporting more than $100 billion a year to China in goods and services. And as a result of deals we completed this week, we'll be increasing U.S. exports to China by more than $45 billion and China's investment in America by several billion dollars. Most important, these deals will support some 235,000 American jobs, and that includes a lot of manufacturing jobs.

That goal is why I fought so hard to negotiate a new and better trade deal with South Korea, a deal with unprecedented support from business and labor that will support more than 70,000 American jobs. And that's why I traveled to India last fall to help pave the way for $10 billion in new deals for American businesses and more than 50,000 new American jobs.

Now, these may just sound like statistics. But yesterday I saw what that means firsthand when I traveled to a GE plant in Schenectady, New York. This plant is manufacturing steam turbines and generators for a big project in India that resulted from a deal we announced around that trip, a project that is helping support more than 1,200 manufacturing jobs and more than 400 engineering jobs in Schenectady, good jobs at good wages, producing American products for the world.

At the same time, GE has also been investing in innovation, building a clean energy center, an advanced battery manufacturing plant, and other state-of-the-art facilities in Schenectady that are resulting in hundreds of new American jobs and contributing to America's global economic leadership.

Leading the world in innovation, opening new markets to American products, that's how we'll create jobs today. That's how we'll make America more competitive tomorrow. And that's how we're going to win the future.

Now, while I was in Schenectady, I announced that Jeff Immelt, GE's CEO and one of the most imaginative and visionary business leaders in America, has agreed to head up our new Council on Jobs and Competitiveness. The purpose of this Council is to help us find ways to grow our economy by investing in our businesses here at home. And under Jeff's leadership, I'm confident that they'll generate good ideas about how we can spur hiring, educate our workers to compete in the 21st century, and attract the best jobs and businesses to America rather than seeing them spring up overseas.

We're living in a new and challenging time, in which technology has made competition easier and fiercer than ever before. Countries around the world are upping their game and giving their workers and companies every advantage possible. That shouldn't discourage us, because I know we can win that competition. I know we can outcompete any other nation on Earth. We just have to make sure we're doing everything we can to unlock the productivity of

American workers, unleash the ingenuity of American businesses, and harness the dynamism of America's economy.

Thanks everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:50 p.m. on January 21 in the Red Room at the White House for broadcast on January 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 21, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 22.

Statement on the 38th Anniversary of the Supreme Court Decision in *Roe* v. *Wade*
January 22, 2011

Today marks the 38th anniversary of *Roe* v. *Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that protects women's health and reproductive freedom and affirms a fundamental principle that government should not intrude on private family matters. I am committed to protecting this constitutional right. I also remain committed to policies, initiatives, and programs that help prevent unintended pregnancies, support pregnant women and mothers, encourage healthy relationships, and promote adoption. And on this anniversary, I hope that we will recommit ourselves more broadly to ensuring that our daughters have the same rights, the same freedoms, and the same opportunities as our sons to fulfill their dreams.

Remarks Announcing Efforts To Strengthen Government Support for Military Families
January 24, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Everyone, please have a seat. Thank you so much.

Well, good morning, everyone. I want to thank Michelle and Jill—although I have to say, I hate following both of them. [*Laughter*] As I think all of you sense, when they speak, the Government listens. You should know—and I know Joe Biden would agree with this—when they speak, the President and Vice President listen. [*Laughter*]

So, Michelle and Jill, on behalf of all of us, thank you for being such extraordinary champions for our military families and making sure that their priorities are America's priorities.

To all the Members of Congress who are here, the members of my Cabinet, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, leaders from across the administration, and most of all, our troops, their families, their advocates: Thanks for joining us as we make an unprecedented commitment to America's military families.

Now, last month I was in Afghanistan to visit our troops and to thank them for their service, especially during the holidays. And I think as some of you are aware, we fly in, in the dark of night for security reasons, unannounced. Folks, I'm sure, have to scramble on the other end to make sure that our visit works. And we had a wonderful crowd, a great rally. And then afterwards, I took the time not only to meet with General Petraeus and some of the other commanding officers, but I also met with a group of our special ops forces. Now, anybody who's met with SEALs and Deltas, you know these are some of the toughest, most battle-hardened troops in our military. They are involved in some of the most dangerous fighting that there is.

These are tough guys. Looking at them, you can tell they're tough. Some folks end up being tough, but these—you can just tell these guys are tough. [*Laughter*] And they embody the courage and character that makes our military the finest in the world. And just to give you some sense, these guys are going out on helicopter raids at night with very little support

and carrying out extremely dangerous assignments each and every day.

So I asked them, I said: "What do you need from me? What can I do to support you better?" And without missing a beat, they looked me in the eye and they gave me their answer. It wasn't about more equipment. It wasn't about more resources on the battlefield. In fact, it wasn't about them. They said—to a man—"Sir, take care of our families. Take care of our families. If we know our families are all right back home, then we can do our jobs."

So we are here today because nearly a decade of war has been taking place, and our Armed Forces—you and your families—have done everything you've been asked to do. You've been everything we could ask you to be. You have done your duty. And as a grateful nation, we must do ours. We have to make sure that America is serving you as well as you have served us.

This isn't just a military or—this is not just a moral obligation. This is a matter of national security. With millions of military spouses, parents, and children sacrificing as well, the readiness of our Armed Forces depends on the readiness of our military families.

As Michelle mentioned, she and I see this in the spouses we meet. During vacation, while we were in Hawaii, we had a chance to see a whole bunch of military families out on Kaneohe Marine base. And what was true then in the conversations we had is what we find wherever we go around the country: truly heroic wives and husbands who become single parents on the homefront and somehow keep it all together—the house, the kids, maybe even a job of their own.

We see it in the resilience of so many military kids, boys and girls who, like all the other kids, are just trying to grow up, trying to find their way, but who, unlike other kids, are also having to worry about whether their mom or dad is going to come home safe.

We see it in the devotion of caregivers who tend to their loved ones, our wounded warriors, around the clock, day in, day out. And we see it in the quiet pride of our veterans, who only ask that we live up to those words from President Lincoln, that as a nation, we truly care for all those who have "borne the battle." We see it in the unending love of the families of the fallen, our Gold Star families, who've given their Nation the people they loved most in the world.

As Commander in Chief, I am determined to do everything in my power to make sure that we are fulfilling that request from our troops, that we are taking care of their families. And that's why over the past 2 years, we've made major investments: more military housing, more childcare, new schools for our military kids; more counseling and career support for spouses; more help for those tireless caregivers; dramatic increases in veterans health care; and helping hundreds of thousands of veterans and family members pursue their education through the post-9/11 GI bill.

And that's why I ordered this Government-wide effort, a Presidential Study Directive, to bring together the resources of the Federal Government for this mission. Now, for those of you who aren't familiar with these Presidential directives, these are reserved for some of the most important and complex national security challenges. I think Mike Mullen will share with you, since becoming President, I've only ordered about a dozen, including this one, which we believe is the first one ever on behalf of military families.

Today I'm proud to announce that for the first time ever, supporting the well-being of our military families will be a priority not just for the Departments of Defense and the Departments of Veterans Affairs, but all across the Federal Government. That's why all these Cabinet folks are here today. Sixteen members of my Cabinet have committed their departments and agencies to making military families one of their highest priorities.

We're focusing on four areas, the things you said matter most to you, whether you're Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine, or Coast Guard; Active, Guard, or Reserve; a veteran or a member of a family of the fallen. We didn't wait for today to launch these efforts. Many of these efforts have already been underway. And that includes innovative new partnerships so that, in

tough fiscal times, our Government is more efficient and serves you better.

So let me just list our primary areas of focus. First, we are putting new emphasis on the quality of life for our military families. The Departments of Defense and Health and Human Services, for example, have joined forces to improve community mental health services and prevent suicides. A new office in the Treasury Department is working to protect military families from abusive practices like predatory lending. It turns out that military families are more subject to some of these financial scams than just about any other group.

The Agricultural Department is expanding its support for families in rural areas. A disproportionate number of our military families come from rural areas or are stationed in rural communities.

The Interior Department—we use our national parks to help our wounded warriors recover. And we are going to remain relentless—not just at VA, but at HUD and HHS and across the Government—in our fight to end homelessness among our veterans. We have to have zero tolerance for homelessness among our veterans.

Second, we're putting a new focus on the education and development of our military children, most of whom go to public schools. So for the first time ever, the Department of Education will make military families a priority for some of its grant programs. And that's going to give States and communities new incentives to address the unique needs of military children.

The Interior Department, which is already one of the largest Federal employers of young people, will create more opportunities, like summer jobs, for young people from military families. And today we are renewing our call for every State to adopt the Interstate Compact, which makes it easier for military children to transfer between schools and succeed in the classroom.

Third, we're redoubling our efforts to help military spouses pursue their educations and careers. As Michelle said, we've brought in the Departments of Labor and Commerce and the Small Business Administration. We're going to help spouses to get that degree, find that job, or start that new business. We want every company in America to know our military spouses and veterans have the skills and the dedication, and our Nation is more competitive when we tap their incredible talents.

And finally, we're going to keep increasing childcare for our military moms and dads with young children. This is not just a job for the Department of Defense. As Michelle said, the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Agriculture are now helping too. And working together, we believe we can find new childcare options for tens of thousands of military children.

So these are just some of the nearly 50 specific commitments that my administration is making today. In other words, we're not simply reaffirming our responsibility to our military families, we are upping our game. In fact, these 16 members of my Cabinet have signed their name to this report, pledging personally to see this through. So, gang, you are all on the hook. [*Laughter*] We know where to find you—and not only to fulfill these commitments, but to make sure that as we go forward, our military families are being heard across the Government. That's what we're looking for here.

Michelle and Jill said they're going to keep pushing, and I promise you, they are not kidding. [*Laughter*] And as President, I'm going to make sure that we get this done.

We also recognize that this can't be a mission for government alone. Government has its responsibilities. But 1 percent of Americans may be fighting our wars; 100 percent of Americans need to be supporting our troops and their families—100 percent.

So to help launch this effort, Michelle will be on "Oprah" this week to urge every American to join a new national campaign to support our military families. That's a pretty good plug.

You see, this is one of those challenges and one of those moments when we have to remember what unites us as Americans, what we can achieve together, and what we owe to each

other, especially to those who serve and sacrifice so we can live free and be safe.

I want every servicemember who's deployed to know that when you're over there taking care of the country that you love, your country is back here taking care of the families that you love. I want every military wife and husband to know that we're going to help you keep your family strong and secure. I want every military kid to know that we're going to be there for you too, to help you grow and to live your dreams.

I want our Gold Star families to know that this Nation will never forget and will always honor the supreme sacrifice that your family has made to our Nation.

And I want every single American to remember that as the beneficiaries of their service, each of us has an obligation, a sacred duty, to care for those who have "borne the battle."

These are my commitments, these are Michelle and Jill's commitments, these are my administration's commitments, and they must be America's commitments. And as long as I am President, we're going to keep working to fulfill those commitments for all who serve.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan; and Adm. Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union
January 25, 2011

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow Americans: Tonight I want to begin by congratulating the men and women of the 112th Congress, as well as your new Speaker, John Boehner. And as we mark this occasion, we're also mindful of the empty chair in this Chamber, and we pray for the health of our colleague and our friend Gabby Giffords.

It's no secret that those of us here tonight have had our differences over the last 2 years. The debates have been contentious; we have fought fiercely for our beliefs. And that's a good thing. That's what a robust democracy demands. That's what helps set us apart as a nation.

But there's a reason the tragedy in Tucson gave us pause. Amid all the noise and passion and rancor of our public debate, Tucson reminded us that no matter who we are or where we come from, each of us is a part of something greater, something more consequential than party or political preference.

We are part of the American family. We believe that in a country where every race and faith and point of view can be found, we are still bound together as one people, that we share common hopes and a common creed, that the dreams of a little girl in Tucson are not so different than those of our own children, that they all deserve the chance to be fulfilled. That too is what sets us apart as a nation.

Now, by itself, this simple recognition won't usher in a new era of cooperation. What comes of this moment is up to us. What comes of this moment will be determined not by whether we can sit together tonight, but whether we can work together tomorrow.

I believe we can, and I believe we must. That's what the people who sent us here expect of us. With their votes, they've determined that governing will now be a shared responsibility between parties. New laws will only pass with support from Democrats and Republicans. We will move forward together or not at all, for the challenges we face are bigger than party and bigger than politics.

At stake right now is not who wins the next election. After all, we just had an election. At stake is whether new jobs and industries take root in this country or somewhere else. It's whether the hard work and industry of our people is rewarded. It's whether we sustain the leadership that has made America not just a place on a map, but the light to the world.

We are poised for progress. Two years after the worst recession most of us have ever known, the stock market has come roaring back, corporate profits are up, the economy is growing again.

But we have never measured progress by these yardsticks alone. We measure progress by the success of our people, by the jobs they can find and the quality of life those jobs offer, by the prospects of a small-business owner who dreams of turning a good idea into a thriving enterprise, by the opportunities for a better life that we pass on to our children.

That's the project the American people want us to work on—together.

Now, we did that in December. Thanks to the tax cuts we passed, Americans' paychecks are a little bigger today. Every business can write off the full cost of new investments that they make this year. And these steps, taken by Democrats and Republicans, will grow the economy and add to the more than 1 million private sector jobs created last year.

But we have to do more. These steps we've taken over the last 2 years may have broken the back of this recession, but to win the future, we'll need to take on challenges that have been decades in the making.

Many people watching tonight can probably remember a time when finding a good job meant showing up at a nearby factory or a business downtown. You didn't always need a degree, and your competition was pretty much limited to your neighbors. If you worked hard, chances are you'd have a job for life, with a decent paycheck and good benefits and the occasional promotion. Maybe you'd even have the pride of seeing your kids work at the same company.

That world has changed. And for many, the change has been painful. I've seen it in the shuttered windows of once booming factories and the vacant storefronts on once busy Main Streets. I've heard it in the frustrations of Americans who've seen their paychecks dwindle or their jobs disappear, proud men and women who feel like the rules have been changed in the middle of the game.

They're right. The rules have changed. In a single generation, revolutions in technology have transformed the way we live, work, and do business. Steel mills that once needed 1,000 workers can now do the same work with 100. Today, just about any company can set up shop, hire workers, and sell their products wherever there's an Internet connection.

Meanwhile, nations like China and India realized that with some changes of their own, they could compete in this new world. And so they started educating their children earlier and longer, with greater emphasis on math and science. They're investing in research and new technologies. Just recently, China became the home to the world's largest private solar research facility and the world's fastest computer.

So yes, the world is changed. The competition for jobs is real. But this shouldn't discourage us. It should challenge us. Remember, for all the hits we've taken these last few years, for all the naysayers predicting our decline, America still has the largest, most prosperous economy in the world. No workers are more productive than ours. No country has more successful companies or grants more patents to inventors and entrepreneurs. We're the home to the world's best colleges and universities, where more students come to study than any place on Earth.

What's more, we are the first nation to be founded for the sake of an idea: the idea that each of us deserves the chance to shape our own destiny. That's why centuries of pioneers and immigrants have risked everything to come here. It's why our students don't just memorize equations, but answer questions like: "What do you think of that idea? What would you change about the world? What do you want to be when you grow up?"

The future is ours to win. But to get there, we can't just stand still. As Robert Kennedy told us: "The future is not a gift. It is an achievement." Sustaining the American Dream has never been about standing pat. It has required each generation to sacrifice and struggle and meet the demands of a new age.

And now it's our turn. We know what it takes to compete for the jobs and industries of our time. We need to outinnovate, outeducate, and outbuild the rest of the world. We have to make America the best place on Earth to do business. We need to take responsibility for our deficit and reform our Government. That's how our people will prosper. That's how we'll win the future. And tonight I'd like to talk about how we get there.

The first step in winning the future is encouraging American innovation. None of us can predict with certainty what the next big industry will be or where the new jobs will come from. Thirty years ago, we couldn't know that something called the Internet would lead to an economic revolution. What we can do—what America does better than anyone else—is spark the creativity and imagination of our people. We're the nation that put cars in driveways and computers in offices; the nation of Edison and the Wright brothers, of Google and Facebook. In America, innovation doesn't just change our lives. It is how we make our living.

Our free enterprise system is what drives innovation. But because it's not always profitable for companies to invest in basic research, throughout our history, our Government has provided cutting-edge scientists and inventors with the support that they need. That's what planted the seeds for the Internet. That's what helped make possible things like computer chips and GPS. Just think of all the good jobs—from manufacturing to retail—that have come from these breakthroughs.

Half a century ago, when the Soviets beat us into space with the launch of a satellite called Sputnik, we had no idea how we would beat them to the Moon. The science wasn't even there yet. NASA didn't exist. But after investing in better research and education, we didn't just surpass the Soviets, we unleashed a wave of innovation that created new industries and millions of new jobs.

This is our generation's Sputnik moment. Two years ago, I said that we needed to reach a level of research and development we haven't seen since the height of the space race. And in a few weeks, I will be sending a budget to Congress that helps us meet that goal. We'll invest in biomedical research, information technology, and especially clean energy technology, an investment that will strengthen our security, protect our planet, and create countless new jobs for our people.

Already, we're seeing the promise of renewable energy. Robert and Gary Allen are brothers who run a small Michigan roofing company. After September 11, they volunteered their best roofers to help repair the Pentagon. But half of their factory went unused, and the recession hit them hard. Today, with the help of a Government loan, that empty space is being used to manufacture solar shingles that are being sold all across the country. In Robert's words, "We reinvented ourselves."

That's what Americans have done for over 200 years: reinvented ourselves. And to spur on more success stories like the Allen Brothers, we've begun to reinvent our energy policy. We're not just handing out money. We're issuing a challenge. We're telling America's scientists and engineers that if they assemble teams of the best minds in their fields and focus on the hardest problems in clean energy, we'll fund the Apollo projects of our time.

At the California Institute of Technology, they're developing a way to turn sunlight and water into fuel for our cars. At Oak Ridge National Laboratory, they're using supercomputers to get a lot more power out of our nuclear facilities. With more research and incentives, we can break our dependence on oil with biofuels and become the first country to have a million electric vehicles on the road by 2015.

We need to get behind this innovation. And to help pay for it, I'm asking Congress to eliminate the billions in taxpayer dollars we currently give to oil companies. I don't know if you've noticed, but they're doing just fine on their

own. [*Laughter*] So instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy, let's invest in tomorrow's.

Now, clean energy breakthroughs will only translate into clean energy jobs if businesses know there will be a market for what they're selling. So tonight I challenge you to join me in setting a new goal: By 2035, 80 percent of America's electricity will come from clean energy sources.

Some folks want wind and solar. Others want nuclear, clean coal, and natural gas. To meet this goal, we will need them all, and I urge Democrats and Republicans to work together to make it happen.

Maintaining our leadership in research and technology is crucial to America's success. But if we want to win the future, if we want innovation to produce jobs in America and not overseas, then we also have to win the race to educate our kids.

Think about it. Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education that goes beyond a high school education. And yet as many as a quarter of our students aren't even finishing high school. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations. America has fallen to ninth in the proportion of young people with a college degree. And so the question is whether all of us, as citizens and as parents, are willing to do what's necessary to give every child a chance to succeed.

That responsibility begins not in our classrooms, but in our homes and communities. It's family that first instills the love of learning in a child. Only parents can make sure the TV is turned off and homework gets done. We need to teach our kids that it's not just the winner of the Super Bowl who deserves to be celebrated, but the winner of the science fair. We need to teach them that success is not a function of fame or PR, but of hard work and discipline.

Our schools share this responsibility. When a child walks into a classroom, it should be a place of high expectations and high performance. But too many schools don't meet this test. That's why instead of just pouring money into a system that's not working, we launched a competition called Race to the Top. To all 50 States, we said, "If you show us the most innovative plans to improve teacher quality and student achievement, we'll show you the money."

Race to the Top is the most meaningful reform of our public schools in a generation. For less than 1 percent of what we spend on education each year, it has led over 40 States to raise their standards for teaching and learning. And these standards were developed, by the way, not by Washington, but by Republican and Democratic Governors throughout the country. And Race to the Top should be the approach we follow this year as we replace No Child Left Behind with a law that's more flexible and focused on what's best for our kids.

You see, we know what's possible from our children when reform isn't just a top-down mandate, but the work of local teachers and principals, school boards and communities. Take a school like Bruce Randolph in Denver. Three years ago, it was rated one of the worst schools in Colorado, located on turf between two rival gangs. But last May, 97 percent of the seniors received their diploma. Most will be the first in their families to go to college. And after the first year of the school's transformation, the principal who made it possible wiped away tears when a student said, "Thank you, Ms. Waters, for showing that we are smart and we can make it." That's what good schools can do, and we want good schools all across the country.

Let's also remember that after parents, the biggest impact on a child's success comes from the man or woman at the front of the classroom. In South Korea, teachers are known as nation builders. Here in America, it's time we treated the people who educate our children with the same level of respect. We want to reward good teachers and stop making excuses for bad ones. And over the next 10 years, with so many baby boomers retiring from our classrooms, we want to prepare 100,000 new teachers in the fields of science and technology and engineering and math.

In fact, to every young person listening tonight who's contemplating their career choice: If you want to make a difference in the life of our Nation, if you want to make a difference in

the life of a child, become a teacher. Your country needs you.

Of course, the education race doesn't end with a high school diploma. To compete, higher education must be within the reach of every American. That's why we've ended the unwarranted taxpayer subsidies that went to banks and used the savings to make college affordable for millions of students. And this year, I ask Congress to go further and make permanent our tuition tax credit, worth $10,000 for 4 years of college. It's the right thing to do.

Because people need to be able to train for new jobs and careers in today's fast-changing economy, we're also revitalizing America's community colleges. Last month, I saw the promise of these schools at Forsyth Tech in North Carolina. Many of the students there used to work in the surrounding factories that have since left town. One mother of two, a woman named Kathy Proctor, had worked in the furniture industry since she was 18 years old. And she told me she's earning her degree in biotechnology now, at 55 years old, not just because the furniture jobs are gone, but because she wants to inspire her children to pursue their dreams too. As Kathy said, "I hope it tells them to never give up."

If we take these steps, if we raise expectations for every child and give them the best possible chance at an education, from the day they are born until the last job they take, we will reach the goal that I set 2 years ago: By the end of the decade, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.

One last point about education: Today, there are hundreds of thousands of students excelling in our schools who are not American citizens. Some are the children of undocumented workers, who had nothing to do with the actions of their parents. They grew up as Americans and pledge allegiance to our flag, and yet they live every day with the threat of deportation. Others come here from abroad to study in our colleges and universities. But as soon as they obtain advanced degrees, we send them back home to compete against us. It makes no sense.

Now, I strongly believe that we should take on, once and for all, the issue of illegal immigration. And I am prepared to work with Republicans and Democrats to protect our borders, enforce our laws, and address the millions of undocumented workers who are now living in the shadows. I know that debate will be difficult. I know it will take time. But tonight, let's agree to make that effort. And let's stop expelling talented, responsible young people who could be staffing our research labs or starting a new business, who could be further enriching this Nation.

The third step in winning the future is rebuilding America. To attract new businesses to our shores, we need the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information, from high-speed rail to high-speed Internet.

Our infrastructure used to be the best, but our lead has slipped. South Korean homes now have greater Internet access than we do. Countries in Europe and Russia invest more in their roads and railways than we do. China is building faster trains and newer airports. Meanwhile, when our own engineers graded our Nation's infrastructure, they gave us a D.

We have to do better. America is the nation that built the transcontinental railroad, brought electricity to rural communities, constructed the Interstate Highway System. The jobs created by these projects didn't just come from laying down track or pavement. They came from businesses that opened near a town's new train station or the new off-ramp.

So over the last 2 years, we've begun rebuilding for the 21st century, a project that has meant thousands of good jobs for the hard-hit construction industry. And tonight I'm proposing that we redouble those efforts.

We'll put more Americans to work repairing crumbling roads and bridges. We'll make sure this is fully paid for, attract private investment, and pick projects based [on]* what's best for the economy, not politicians.

* White House correction.

Within 25 years, our goal is to give 80 percent of Americans access to high-speed rail. This could allow you to go places in half the time it takes to travel by car. For some trips, it will be faster than flying, without the patdown. [*Laughter*] As we speak, routes in California and the Midwest are already underway.

Within the next 5 years, we'll make it possible for businesses to deploy the next generation of high-speed wireless coverage to 98 percent of all Americans. This isn't just about—this isn't about faster Internet or fewer dropped calls. It's about connecting every part of America to the digital age. It's about a rural community in Iowa or Alabama where farmers and small-business owners will be able to sell their products all over the world. It's about a firefighter who can download the design of a burning building onto a handheld device, a student who can take classes with a digital textbook, or a patient who can have face-to-face video chats with her doctor.

All these investments—in innovation, education, and infrastructure—will make America a better place to do business and create jobs. But to help our companies compete, we also have to knock down barriers that stand in the way of their success.

For example, over the years, a parade of lobbyists has rigged the Tax Code to benefit particular companies and industries. Those with accountants or lawyers to work the system can end up paying no taxes at all. But all the rest are hit with one of the highest corporate tax rates in the world. It makes no sense, and it has to change.

So tonight I'm asking Democrats and Republicans to simplify the system, get rid of the loopholes, level the playing field, and use the savings to lower the corporate tax rate for the first time in 25 years without adding to our deficit. It can be done.

To help businesses sell more products abroad, we set a goal of doubling our exports by 2014. Because the more we export, the more jobs we create here at home. Already, our exports are up. Recently, we signed agreements with India and China that will support more than 250,000 jobs here in the United States. And last month, we finalized a trade agreement with South Korea that will support at least 70,000 American jobs. This agreement has unprecedented support from business and labor, Democrats and Republicans, and I ask this Congress to pass it as soon as possible.

Now, before I took office, I made it clear that we would enforce our trade agreements and that I would only sign deals that keep faith with American workers and promote American jobs. That's what we did with Korea, and that's what I intend to do as we pursue agreements with Panama and Colombia and continue our Asia-Pacific and global trade talks.

To reduce barriers to growth and investment, I've ordered a review of Government regulations. When we find rules that put an unnecessary burden on businesses, we will fix them. But I will not hesitate to create or enforce commonsense safeguards to protect the American people. That's what we've done in this country for more than a century. It's why our food is safe to eat, our water is safe to drink, and our air is safe to breathe. It's why we have speed limits and child labor laws. It's why last year, we put in place consumer protections against hidden fees and penalties by credit card companies and new rules to prevent another financial crisis. And it's why we passed reform that finally prevents the health insurance industry from exploiting patients.

Now, I have heard rumors that a few of you still have concerns about our new health care law. [*Laughter*] So let me be the first to say that anything can be improved. If you have ideas about how to improve this law by making care better or more affordable, I am eager to work with you. We can start right now by correcting a flaw in the legislation that has placed an unnecessary bookkeeping burden on small businesses.

What I'm not willing to do—what I'm not willing to do—is go back to the days when insurance companies could deny someone coverage because of a preexisting condition.

I'm not willing to tell James Howard, a brain cancer patient from Texas, that his treatment might not be covered. I'm not willing to tell Jim Houser, a small-businessman from Oregon,

that he has to go back to paying $5,000 more to cover his employees. As we speak, this law is making prescription drugs cheaper for seniors and giving uninsured students a chance to stay on their patients'—parents' coverage.

So I say to this Chamber tonight: Instead of refighting the battles of the last 2 years, let's fix what needs fixing, and let's move forward.

Now, the final critical step in winning the future is to make sure we aren't buried under a mountain of debt.

We are living with a legacy of deficit spending that began almost a decade ago. And in the wake of the financial crisis, some of that was necessary to keep credit flowing, save jobs, and put money in people's pockets.

But now that the worst of the recession is over, we have to confront the fact that our Government spends more than it takes in. That is not sustainable. Every day, families sacrifice to live within their means. They deserve a Government that does the same.

So tonight I am proposing that starting this year, we freeze annual domestic spending for the next 5 years. Now, this would reduce the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade and will bring discretionary spending to the lowest share of our economy since Dwight Eisenhower was President.

This freeze will require painful cuts. Already, we've frozen the salaries of hard-working Federal employees for the next 2 years. I've proposed cuts to things I care deeply about, like community action programs. The Secretary of Defense has also agreed to cut tens of billions of dollars in spending that he and his generals believe our military can do without.

Now, I recognize that some in this Chamber have already proposed deeper cuts, and I'm willing to eliminate whatever we can honestly afford to do without. But let's make sure that we're not doing it on the backs of our most vulnerable citizens. And let's make sure that what we're cutting is really excess weight. Cutting the deficit by gutting our investments in innovation and education is like lightening an overloaded airplane by removing its engine. It may make you feel like you're flying high at first, but it won't take long before you feel the impact. [*Laughter*]

Now, most of the cuts and savings I've proposed only address annual domestic spending, which represents a little more than 12 percent of our budget. To make further progress, we have to stop pretending that cutting this kind of spending alone will be enough. It won't.

The bipartisan fiscal commission I created last year made this crystal clear. I don't agree with all their proposals, but they made important progress. And their conclusion is that the only way to tackle our deficit is to cut excessive spending wherever we find it, in domestic spending, defense spending, health care spending, and spending through tax breaks and loopholes.

This means further reducing health care costs, including programs like Medicare and Medicaid, which are the single biggest contributor to our long-term deficit. The health insurance law we passed last year will slow these rising costs, which is part of the reason that nonpartisan economists have said that repealing the health care law would add a quarter of a trillion dollars to our deficit. Still, I'm willing to look at other ideas to bring down costs, including one that Republicans suggested last year: medical malpractice reform to rein in frivolous lawsuits.

To put us on solid ground, we should also find a bipartisan solution to strengthen Social Security for future generations. We must do it without putting at risk current retirees, the most vulnerable, or people with disabilities, without slashing benefits for future generations, and without subjecting Americans' guaranteed retirement income to the whims of the stock market.

And if we truly care about our deficit, we simply can't afford a permanent extension of the tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans. Before we take money away from our schools or scholarships away from our students, we should ask millionaires to give up their tax break. It's not a matter of punishing their success, it's about promoting America's success.

In fact, the best thing we could do on taxes for all Americans is to simplify the individual Tax Code. This will be a tough job, but members of both parties have expressed an interest in doing this, and I am prepared to join them.

So now is the time to act. Now is the time for both sides and both Houses of Congress, Democrats and Republicans, to forge a principled compromise that gets the job done. If we make the hard choices now to rein in our deficits, we can make the investments we need to win the future.

Let me take this one step further. We shouldn't just give our people a Government that's more affordable, we should give them a Government that's more competent and more efficient. We can't win the future with a Government of the past.

We live and do business in the Information Age, but the last major reorganization of the Government happened in the age of black-and-white TV. There are 12 different agencies that deal with exports. There are at least five different agencies that deal with housing policy. Then there's my favorite example: The Interior Department is in charge of salmon while they're in fresh water, but the Commerce Department handles them when they're in saltwater. [*Laughter*] I hear it gets even more complicated once they're smoked. [*Laughter*]

Now, we've made great strides over the last 2 years in using technology and getting rid of waste. Veterans can now download their electronic medical records with a click of the mouse. We're selling acres of Federal office space that hasn't been used in years, and we'll cut through redtape to get rid of more. But we need to think bigger. In the coming months, my administration will develop a proposal to merge, consolidate, and reorganize the Federal Government in a way that best serves the goal of a more competitive America. I will submit that proposal to Congress for a vote, and we will push to get it passed.

In the coming year, we'll also work to rebuild people's faith in the institution of Government. Because you deserve to know exactly how and where your tax dollars are being spent, you'll be able to go to a web site and get that information for the very first time in history. Because you deserve to know when your elected officials are meeting with lobbyists, I ask Congress to do what the White House has already done: put that information online. And because the American people deserve to know that special interests aren't larding up legislation with pet projects, both parties in Congress should know this: If a bill comes to my desk with earmarks inside, I will veto it. I will veto it.

The 21st-century Government that's open and competent, a government that lives within its means, an economy that's driven by new skills and new ideas—our success in this new and changing world will require reform, responsibility, and innovation. It will also require us to approach that world with a new level of engagement in our foreign affairs.

Just as jobs and businesses can now race across borders, so can new threats and new challenges. No single wall separates East and West. No one rival superpower is aligned against us.

And so we must defeat determined enemies, wherever they are, and build coalitions that cut across lines of region and race and religion. And America's moral example must always shine for all who yearn for freedom and justice and dignity. And because we've begun this work, tonight we can say that American leadership has been renewed and America's standing has been restored.

Look to Iraq, where nearly 100,000 of our brave men and women have left with their heads held high. American combat patrols have ended, violence is down, and a new Government has been formed. This year, our civilians will forge a lasting partnership with the Iraqi people, while we finish the job of bringing our troops out of Iraq. America's commitment has been kept. The Iraq war is coming to an end.

Of course, as we speak, Al Qaida and their affiliates continue to plan attacks against us. Thanks to our intelligence and law enforcement professionals, we're disrupting plots and securing our cities and skies. And as extremists try to inspire acts of violence within our

borders, we are responding with the strength of our communities, with respect for the rule of law, and with the conviction that American Muslims are a part of our American family.

We've also taken the fight to Al Qaida and their allies abroad. In Afghanistan, our troops have taken Taliban strongholds and trained Afghan security forces. Our purpose is clear: By preventing the Taliban from reestablishing a stranglehold over the Afghan people, we will deny Al Qaida the safe haven that served as a launching pad for 9/11.

Thanks to our heroic troops and civilians, fewer Afghans are under the control of the insurgency. There will be tough fighting ahead, and the Afghan Government will need to deliver better governance. But we are strengthening the capacity of the Afghan people and building an enduring partnership with them. This year, we will work with nearly 50 countries to begin a transition to an Afghan lead, and this July, we will begin to bring our troops home.

In Pakistan, Al Qaida's leadership is under more pressure than at any point since 2001. Their leaders and operatives are being removed from the battlefield. Their safe havens are shrinking. And we've sent a message from the Afghan border to the Arabian Peninsula to all parts of the globe: We will not relent, we will not waver, and we will defeat you.

American leadership can also be seen in the effort to secure the worst weapons of war. Because Republicans and Democrats approved the new START Treaty, far fewer nuclear weapons and launchers will be deployed. Because we rallied the world, nuclear materials are being locked down on every continent so they never fall into the hands of terrorists.

Because of a diplomatic effort to insist that Iran meet its obligations, the Iranian Government now faces tougher sanctions, tighter sanctions than ever before. And on the Korean Peninsula, we stand with our ally South Korea and insist that North Korea keeps its commitment to abandon nuclear weapons.

This is just a part of how we're shaping a world that favors peace and prosperity. With our European allies, we revitalized NATO and increased our cooperation on everything from counterterrorism to missile defense. We've reset our relationship with Russia, strengthened Asian alliances, built new partnerships with nations like India.

This March, I will travel to Brazil, Chile, and El Salvador to forge new alliances across the Americas. Around the globe, we're standing with those who take responsibility, helping farmers grow more food, supporting doctors who care for the sick, and combating the corruption that can rot a society and rob people of opportunity.

Recent events have shown us that what sets us apart must not just be our power; it must also be the purpose behind it. In south Sudan—with our assistance—the people were finally able to vote for independence after years of war. Thousands lined up before dawn. People danced in the streets. One man who lost four of his brothers at war summed up the scene around him. "This was a battlefield for most of my life," he said. "Now we want to be free."

And we saw that same desire to be free in Tunisia, where the will of the people proved more powerful than the writ of a dictator. And tonight let us be clear: The United States of America stands with the people of Tunisia and supports the democratic aspirations of all people.

We must never forget that the things we've struggled for and fought for live in the hearts of people everywhere. And we must always remember that the Americans who have borne the greatest burden in this struggle are the men and women who serve our country.

Tonight let us speak with one voice in reaffirming that our Nation is united in support of our troops and their families. Let us serve them as well as they've served us, by giving them the equipment they need, by providing them with the care and benefits that they have earned, and by enlisting our veterans in the great task of building our own Nation.

Our troops come from every corner of this country. They're Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American. They are Christian and Hindu, Jewish and Muslim. And yes, we know that

some of them are gay. Starting this year, no American will be forbidden from serving the country they love because of who they love. And with that change, I call on all our college campuses to open their doors to our military recruiters and ROTC. It is time to leave behind the divisive battles of the past. It is time to move forward as one Nation.

We should have no illusions about the work ahead of us. Reforming our schools, changing the way we use energy, reducing our deficit, none of this will be easy. All of it will take time. And it will be harder because we will argue about everything: the costs, the details, the letter of every law.

Of course, some countries don't have this problem. If the central government wants a railroad, they build a railroad, no matter how many homes get bulldozed. If they don't want a bad story in the newspaper, it doesn't get written.

And yet, as contentious and frustrating and messy as our democracy can sometimes be, I know there isn't a person here who would trade places with any other nation on Earth.

We may have differences in policy, but we all believe in the rights enshrined in our Constitution. We may have different opinions, but we believe in the same promise that says this is a place where you can make it if you try. We may have different backgrounds, but we believe in the same dream that says this is a country where anything is possible, no matter who you are, no matter where you come from.

That dream is why I can stand here before you tonight. That dream is why a working class kid from Scranton can sit behind me. [*Laughter*] That dream is why someone who began by sweeping the floors of his father's Cincinnati bar can preside as Speaker of the House in the greatest nation on Earth.

That dream—that American Dream—is what drove the Allen Brothers to reinvent their roofing company for a new era. It's what drove those students at Forsyth Tech to learn a new skill and work towards the future. And that dream is the story of a small-business owner named Brandon Fisher.

Brandon started a company in Berlin, Pennsylvania, that specializes in a new kind of drilling technology. And one day last summer, he saw the news that halfway across the world, 33 men were trapped in a Chilean mine, and no one knew how to save them.

But Brandon thought his company could help. And so he designed a rescue that would come to be known as Plan B. His employees worked around the clock to manufacture the necessary drilling equipment, and Brandon left for Chile.

Along with others, he began drilling a 2,000-foot hole into the ground, working 3 or 4 hour—3 or 4 days at a time without any sleep. Thirty-seven days later, Plan B succeeded and the miners were rescued. But because he didn't want all of the attention, Brandon wasn't there when the miners emerged. He'd already gone back home, back to work on his next project.

And later, one of his employees said of the rescue, "We proved that Center Rock is a little company, but we do big things."

We do big things.

From the earliest days of our founding, America has been the story of ordinary people who dare to dream. That's how we win the future.

We're a nation that says, "I might not have a lot of money, but I have this great idea for a new company." "I might not come from a family of college graduates, but I will be the first to get my degree." "I might not know those people in trouble, but I think I can help them, and I need to try." "I'm not sure how we'll reach that better place beyond the horizon, but I know we'll get there. I know we will."

We do big things.

The idea of America endures. Our destiny remains our choice. And tonight, more than two centuries later, it's because of our people that our future is hopeful, our journey goes forward, and the state of our Union is strong.

Thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:12 p.m. in the House Chamber of the U.S. Capitol. In his

remarks, he referred to Robert and Gary Allen, cofounders, Luma Resources in Rochester Hills, MI; Kristin Waters, principal, Bruce Randolph High School in Denver, CO; and Tom Foy, employee, Center Rock Inc. in Berlin, PA.

Remarks at Orion Energy Systems, Inc., in Manitowoc, Wisconsin
January 26, 2011

Thank you very much, everybody. Everybody have a seat, have a seat. It is wonderful to be here. Sort of reminds me of home, all that snow out there. [*Laughter*]

Let me begin by acknowledging some of the special guests who are here. Governor Scott Walker—where is he? There he is. He says he's the mayor of Manitowoc—[*laughter*]—now, I'm looking at the guy—I don't think it's true, but I'm going to introduce him anyway—Justin Nickels is here. I look at a kid like that—[*laughter*]—my life's way—I'm way behind. The mayor of Green Bay, Jim Schmitt, is here. And Gus Frank is here, Chairman—Mr. Chairman, thank you so much.

Now, let me start by clearing something up. I am not here because I lost a bet. [*Laughter*] I just wanted to be clear about that. I have already gotten three Green Bay jerseys. I mean, I've only been on the ground for an hour. [*Laughter*] I've got three jerseys. One of them is from Woodson, and he just said, "See you in the White House."

So let me just get it out of the way: Sunday was a tough day for Bears fans. [*Laughter*] I see one guy with a Bears hat here. He's got a lot of guts. [*Laughter*]

But even if it didn't go the way that I wanted, I am glad to see that one of the greatest rivalries in sports is still there. And we will get you next year. [*Laughter*] I'm just letting you know. Congratulations. In the spirit of sportsmanship, I wish you good luck in the Super Bowl.

Now, last night, I gave this little speech that I have to do once in a while. [*Laughter*] And what I said was, in this new and challenging time, when America is facing tougher competition from countries around the world than ever before, we've got to up our game. We're going to need to go all in. We're going to need to get serious about winning the future.

Now, the words of the man that the Super Bowl trophy is named after has something to say about winning. He said, "There is no room for second place. There is only one place in my game, and that's first place."

That's the kind of determination to win that America needs to show right now. That's what we need to show. We need to win the future.

And that means making sure that all of our kids are getting the best education possible, not only because we need to give every child a chance to fulfill her God-given potential, but because we need to make sure American workers can go to head-to-head with workers in any country on Earth. We've got to be more productive, more capable, more skilled than any workers on Earth.

It means making sure our infrastructure can meet the demands of the 21st century, rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges, connecting America and the American people with high-speed rail and Internet.

It means doing what we try to do in our own lives: by taking responsibility for our deficits, by cutting wasteful, excessive spending wherever we find it. And it means reforming the way our Government does business so it's efficient and responsive to the needs of Americans instead of being responsive to the needs of lobbyists.

Now, as important as these urgent priorities are, we've also got to make sure that the breakthroughs, the technological breakthroughs that come to define the 21st century, that they take root right here in America. We've got to lead the world in innovation. I spent a lot of time talking about this last night. That's how we'll create the jobs of the future. That's how we're going to build the industries of the future, because we make smarter products using better technology than anybody else. That's how we'll win the future in the 21st century.

So I came here to Manitowoc to glimpse that future. It was right here, almost 50 years ago—I couldn't have made this up. It wasn't until I was on my way here that I found out that a chunk of metal came crashing down to the Earth right here. I promise you, we did not plan this originally. Press won't believe me. It turns out that it was part of a satellite called Sputnik that landed right here, and that set the space race into motion. So I want to say to you today that it is here, more than 50 years later, that the race for the 21st century will be won.

This is a place that's been doing what America has always done throughout its history, you've reinvented yourself. Back in 2003, one of the largest employers around, Mirro, moved their operations abroad. And that must have been a really tough time for this town and this community. Jobs were lost. Families were hurting. Community was shaken up. And I know from Illinois, my home State, when a town loses its major employer it is hard to bounce back. A lot of the young people started moving away, looking for opportunities someplace else.

But you fast-forward to 2011, and new manufacturing plants and new hope are now taking root, part of the reason the unemployment rate here is 4points lower than it was at the beginning of last year. That's good news.

So you have plants like Tower Tech, one of the largest wind tower manufacturers in North America, a company that's grown by several hundred workers in recent years; plants like Skana Aluminum that's hired more than 70 workers since it took over another part of the old Mirro plant and has plans to reach 100 workers by the end of this year. I'm looking forward to visiting those folks—paying a visit to them later today.

But first I wanted to come to Orion. That's where I wanted to come. That's right. I wanted to come to Orion. Orion is a leader in solar power and energy-efficient technology. Plus the plant is just very cool. [*Laughter*]

So I just took a tour with Neal and got a feel for what you're doing. I saw where the metal is cut, where the paint is applied, where the products are assembled. I met some of the outstanding workers like so many of you who've made this company the success that it's become.

Now, in 2004, when Orion moved its manufacturing operations here, I'm told that you just had one employee to oversee the development of the manufacturing floor—one employee. Today, you've got more than 250, and I understand you're hoping to have more than 300 by the end of this year. That's good news right here at Orion.

And these aren't just good jobs that can help you pay the bills and support your families. These jobs are good for all of us because they make everybody's energy bills cheaper; they make the planet safer. What you do is sharpening America's competitive edge all around the world.

The jobs you're creating here, the growth you've achieved have come, I know, through hard work and ingenuity and a single-minded focus on being the best at what you do. But I think it's important because this is part of what I talked about last night when I said that all of us as a country, that America, that our Government has to invest in innovation. It's important to remember that this plant, this company has also been supported over the years not just by the Department of Agriculture and the Small Business Administration, but by tax credits and awards we created to give a leg up to renewable energy companies.

So it's one thing to have a good idea, but as Neal and I were talking, a lot of times Wall Street doesn't necessarily want to take a chance on a good idea until they've seen it proven. Sometimes the research that's required, nobody wants to pay for it. And that's where we have to step in.

America needs to get behind entrepreneurs like Neal. We need to get behind clean energy companies like Orion. We need to get behind innovation. That's how we'll meet the goal I set last night and make sure 80 percent of America's electricity comes from clean energy sources by 2035. That is a goal that we can meet. That is a goal we must meet. That's how we'll make America the first country to have 1 million electric vehicles on the road by 2015. In 5

years, a million electric cars on the road. That's how America will lead the world in clean energy. And as I've said before, the nation that leads the world in clean energy will lead the global economy in the 21st century.

This is something—this is not something that I'm making up just to fill up time in a speech. China is making these investments. They have already captured a big chunk of the solar market partly because we fell down on the job. We weren't moving as fast as we should have. Those are jobs that could be created right here that are getting shipped overseas.

But Orion tells a different story. This is the model for the future. I'm told the story of Orion begins a few decades ago. Neal was switching jobs. He decided to try his hand at clean energy. Clean energy seemed pretty farfetched to a lot of people back then, but Neal figured there might be something to it. So he bought a couple of solar panel distributors. Both of them went under. But Neal didn't give up. He kept at it. He started Orion, a company that would not only distribute, but also manufacture its own lights.

And then, about 10 years ago, Neal had an idea. He calls it his epiphany. Probably, since you guys work here you've all heard this story, but I'm going to tell it for everybody else. [*Laughter*] It was around 2:30 in the morning, but Neal hopped in his car and drove to the factory in Plymouth. It was one of those moments when the future couldn't wait until the morning. And he grabbed whatever tools he could find: a couple 2-by-4s and broom handles. Is this really true, Neal, the broom handles part? [*Laughter*] Is it? He says it's true. So he started tinkering around until an engineer showed up.

And what Neal had come up with was one of Orion's signature innovations: a new lighting fixture that produced twice the light with half the energy. And it was only then that the real work began, because Neal then had to work to apply for loans, find investors, find customers who would believe his improbable pitch.

And doing all of that took time and patience, and most of all, it took persistence. It took determination to succeed. And fortunately, that's not something that Neal has a shortage of: determination. As he said himself, the difference between Orion and other companies is—and I'm quoting Neal now—"the difference between playing to win and playing not to lose." And he says, "At Orion, we play to win." We play to win.

So that's what sets Neal apart. That's what sets Orion apart. But that's also what sets America apart. That's what sets America apart. Here in America, we play to win. We don't play not to lose. And part of what I wanted to communicate last night is, having gone through a tough time, having gone through a recession, having seen so many jobs lost, having seen the financial markets take a swoon, you get a sense that a lot of folks have been feeling like, well, we've just got to play not to lose.

We can't take that attitude. If we're on defense, if we're playing not to lose, somebody else is going to lap us, because there are a lot of hungry folks out there, a lot of countries that are gunning for us. So we've got to play to win. We've got to play to win the future.

And if entrepreneurs like Neal keep sticking with it, and small businesses like Orion keep breaking new ground, and if we, as a country, continue to invest in you, the American people, then I'm absolutely confident America will win the future in this century as we did in the last. So keep it up, Orion. Keep it up, Neal. We're proud of you.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Harold "Gus" Frank, chairman, Forest County Potawatomi; Charles Woodson, cornerback, National Football League's Green Bay Packers; and Neal R. Verfuerth, chief executive officer, Orion Energy Systems, Inc.

Statement on India Republic Day
January 26, 2011

On behalf of the American people, I send my best wishes to the people of India and to those here in the United States and around the world who are celebrating India Republic Day. Michelle and I were honored to visit India in November as India marked the 60th year of its democratic Constitution. As I said then, the United States and India are not only the world's two largest democracies, we are two pluralistic societies that believe in the potential and dignity of every human being.

These are the beliefs that inspire the nearly 3 million Americans who can trace their roots to India and all of whom enrich our society. And they are the beliefs that have led Prime Minister Singh and I to make the U.S.-India relationship one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century. As we go forward together, the enduring lessons of this Republic Day can inspire us to seek a future of greater prosperity and opportunity for both our peoples.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Situation in or in Relation to Cote d'Ivoire
January 26, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to Cote d'Ivoire is to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2011.

The situation in or in relation to Cote d'Ivoire, which has been addressed by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1572 of November 15, 2004, and subsequent resolutions, has resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and fatal attacks against international peacekeeping forces. In March 2007, the Ouagadougou Political Agreement was signed by the two primary protagonists in Cote d'Ivoire's conflict. As demonstrated by recent events surrounding the presidential election in Cote d'Ivoire, the situation in or in relation to Cote d'Ivoire continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
January 26, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol Amending the Swiss Confederation-United States Taxation Convention
January 26, 2011

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to their ratification, the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington on October 2, 1996, signed on September 23, 2009, at Washington, as corrected by an exchange of notes effected November 16, 2010 (the "proposed Protocol") and a related agreement effected by an exchange of notes on September 23, 2009 (the "related Agreement"). I also transmit for the information of the Senate the report of the Department of State, which includes an Overview of the proposed Protocol and related Agreement.

The proposed Protocol and related Agreement provide for more robust exchange of information between tax authorities in the two countries to facilitate the administration of each country's tax laws. They generally follow the current U.S. Model Income Tax Convention and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development standards for exchange of tax information. The proposed Protocol and related Agreement also provide for mandatory arbitration of certain cases that the competent authorities of each country have been unable to resolve after a reasonable period of time.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the proposed Protocol and related Agreement and give its advice and consent to their ratification.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
January 26, 2011.

Statement on the Death of Human Rights Activist David Kato
January 27, 2011

I am deeply saddened to learn of the murder of David Kato. In Uganda, David showed tremendous courage in speaking out against hate. He was a powerful advocate for fairness and freedom. The United States mourns his murder, and we recommit ourselves to David's work.

At home and around the world, LGBT persons continue to be subjected to unconscionable bullying, discrimination, and hate. In the weeks preceding David Kato's murder in Uganda, five members of the LGBT community in Honduras were also murdered. It is essential that the governments of Uganda and Honduras investigate these killings and hold the perpetrators accountable.

LGBT rights are not special rights; they are human rights. My administration will continue to strongly support human rights and assistance work on behalf of LGBT persons abroad. We do this because we recognize the threat faced by leaders like David Kato and we share their commitment to advancing freedom, fairness, and equality for all.

Statement on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Day of Remembrance
January 27, 2011

Fifty years ago, a young President facing mounting pressure at home propelled a fledgling space agency on a bold, new course that would push the frontiers of exploration to new heights. Today, on this day of remembrance, when NASA reflects on the mighty sacrifices made to push those frontiers, America's space agency is working to achieve even greater goals. NASA's new 21st-century course will foster new industries that create jobs, pioneer technology innovation, and inspire a new generation of explorers through education, all while continuing its fundamental missions of exploring our home planet and the cosmos.

Throughout history, however, we have seen that achieving great things sometimes comes at great cost, and we mourn the brave astronauts who made the ultimate sacrifice in support of NASA missions throughout the agency's storied history. We pause to reflect on the tragic loss of the *Apollo 1* crew, those who boarded the Space Shuttle *Challenger* in search of a brighter future, and the brave souls who perished on the Space Shuttle *Columbia*.

Through triumph and tragedy, each of us has benefited from their courage and devotion, and we honor their memory by dedicating ourselves to a better tomorrow. Despite the challenges before us today, let us commit ourselves and continue their valiant journey toward a more vibrant and secure future.

Statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day
January 27, 2011

I join people here at home, in Israel, and around the world in commemorating International Holocaust Remembrance Day, as we mark one of the darkest, most destructive periods in human history.

To remember is a choice, and today we remember the innocent victims of the Nazis' murderous hate, 6 million Jews and millions of other people. We are reminded to remain ever vigilant against the possibility of genocide and to ensure that "Never again" is not just a phrase, but a principled cause. And we resolve to stand up against prejudice, stereotyping, and violence—including the scourge of anti-Semitism—around the globe.

At the same time, we remember the ordinary people who courageously and heroically expressed the very best of the human capacity for compassion and justice by risking their lives to save their fellow human beings during the Holocaust. They demonstrated that in the midst of evil, human beings can perform remarkable acts of decency and dignity.

Finally, on Holocaust Remembrance Day, we remember the survivors and the profound faith and courage they have embodied to build lives of purpose and meaning. In doing so, they are defying those who tried to kill them and teaching us that love and life can vanquish hate and death. Let us honor them and those we lost by building a more peaceful, just, and tolerant world.

Remarks at the Families USA Health Action 2011 Conference
January 28, 2011

Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Thank you. Thank you, Ron, for not only the generous introduction, but for the wonderful leadership and for sharing some of your applause with me. [*Laughter*] To Phil and Kate Villers, for founding Families USA, we thank

them. Thank you. To all of you, organizers and advocates and activists, all of you who believe that change does not come from the top down, it comes from the bottom up, and you guys activated the country—thank you so much for your great work.

On Tuesday, I gave this little speech here in town—[*laughter*]—the State of the Union. I outlined my vision for an America that's more determined, more competitive, better positioned for the future. An America where we outinnovate, we outeducate, we outbuild the rest of the world, where we take responsibility for our deficits, where we reform our Government to meet the demands of a new age.

That's what will be required for the new jobs and new businesses of the 21st century to set up shop here in the United States. That's how our people will prosper within our communities. That's how America will remain a place where each of us is free to choose our own destiny and make of our lives what we will.

Now, for most families, that freedom requires a job that pays the bills, covers your mortgage, helps you look after your children. It means a chance to send those children to college, save enough for retirement. And it means access to quality, affordable health care. That is part of the American Dream.

That security is part of the American Dream. And that's what brought me here, to this conference, 4 years ago this week. I looked younger then. [*Laughter*] I didn't have as much gray hair. [*Laughter*]

Even before the pangs of this historic recession that we've just gone through—so 4 years ago, that was still on the horizon—our friends and neighbors were already dealing with the anxiety and the cruelty of a health care system that just did not work for too many American citizens.

We believed we could change that. We believed that we could finally guarantee quality, affordable care for every American. And even though I hadn't announced my candidacy for this office, I joined you that day in a promise, that we would make health reform a reality by the end of the next President's first term. That was our commitment.

That was our commitment, and together, that is what we did. That is what you did. So thank you for all those years of work to help make it happen. I couldn't be prouder of you.

Now, since I signed the Affordable Care Act into law 10 months ago, Americans already have more power, greater freedom, stronger control of their health care. This law will lower premiums. It is limiting costs. It is reining in the worst abuses of the insurance industry with some of the toughest consumer protections this country has ever known. This is making a real difference for families across this country as we speak.

Now, it's no secret that not everyone in Congress agrees with this law. [*Laughter*] And as I said on Tuesday, I believe that anything can be improved. As we work to implement it, there are going to be times where we say, you know what, this needs a tweak, this isn't working exactly as intended, exactly the way we want. Here's a way of doing it smarter, better. We may be able to serve families to lower costs and improve care even more.

And so I'm willing to work with anyone, Republican or Democrat, to make care better or to make their health care more affordable. I've even suggested we begin by correcting what was a legitimate concern: a flaw in the legislation that placed unnecessary bookkeeping burdens on small businesses. I'm open to other ideas, including patient safety innovations and medical malpractice reform.

But here's what I'm not open to, and I said this on Tuesday. I am not willing to just refight the battles of the last 2 years. I'm not open to efforts that will take this law apart without considering the lives and the livelihoods that hang in the balance. Families USA, we are moving forward. We are moving forward.

Already, small-business owners are taking advantage of the new health care tax credit that can offset as much as 35 percent of the cost of covering their employees.

We've got small-business owners like Janine Vaughn of Spokane, Washington. Janine always tried to do the right thing and cover her workers. But she explained: "We're a small business. We care about everybody who works

here." But over the last 12 years, her premiums have tripled, so that was eating away at her profit margin.

But today, that new tax credit that was part of the Affordable Care Act is helping her cover her workers. And in 2014, she's going to be able to pool together with other small-business owners to shop for a better deal for her staff and for herself, just like large companies can do.

As we speak, Americans are enrolling in new programs that provide affordable coverage for folks who had been shut out of the insurance market because of preexisting conditions. People like Gail O'Brien of Keene, New Hampshire, who was diagnosed with an aggressive form of lymphoma while working full time as a preschool teacher at a school that couldn't afford to offer insurance to its employees.

Because she was sick, no insurer would cover her. As she put it, she was scared to death, not of cancer, but how she'd pay her bills with each round of chemo that cost $16,000. And she thought that she and her husband Matt would have to spend everything they saved to pay for their two sons' college education in order to afford treatment.

Gail was the first person in New Hampshire to sign up for the program available under the Affordable Care Act, and today she is doing great. And by 2014, no insurer will be able to discriminate against her or any one of the up to 129 million other Americans with a preexisting condition. They'll have more affordable private insurance options through State exchanges that promote competition and transparency and better deals for consumers.

Parents of children who suffer from a preexisting condition can finally breathe a sigh of relief too. Parents like Dawn Josephson of Jacksonville, Florida. Dawn is self-employed, so she buys insurance on the individual market. And her son Wesley, who I had a chance to meet—he's adorable—he has an eye condition that demands frequent surgeries.

So in the past, insurers have excluded important benefits from Dawn's plan. As her premiums soared, she called around last summer, after the Affordable Act—Affordable Care Act had taken effect, to find any plan that would cover Wesley. So she finds a company, it's offering her a reasonable rate, but out of habit, Dawn is ready for the runaround. She says, "What's not covered?" And the insurer says: "No, you're covered. Everything's covered." And Dawn says: "I'm not being very clear here. What about my son?" And after going back and forth a few times, the insurer made it clear. He said: "No. Your son is covered. We can no longer exclude preexisting conditions for children. Wesley is covered."

Imagine what that felt like. Imagine the relief that comes with knowing that treatment for your sick child no longer has to threaten the dreams you've worked a lifetime to build for him. You're not going to have to make these heartbreaking choices.

That's happening now. Millions of young Americans can stay on their parents' plans until they turn 26. Millions of older Americans are receiving better access to preventive services and more affordable prescription drugs. We've torn down the barriers that stood between the American people and their doctors so that inside your network, you can see the primary care physician, the pediatrician, the ob-gyn of your choice, and you can use an emergency room outside your network without your insurer sticking you with extra charges.

As of last fall, every American who buys a new plan can access preventive care like mammograms, immunizations, and prenatal care to get and stay healthy for free. And all of this information about the new choices and new rights available to you is available in one simple place: healthcare.gov. You can even log on, plug in your ZIP Code, and compare prices for different insurance—private insurance plans. Right now you can do that.

And this is all before we set up the exchanges that will allow 30 million Americans to get access to care and will allow small companies to finally get the same deal that big companies get, and people being part of a big pool that gives them a better deal across the board.

Now, as important as what is happening right now is what isn't happening right now. You may have heard once or twice that this is a

job-crushing, granny-threatening, budget-busting monstrosity. [*Laughter*] That's about how it's been portrayed by opponents. And that just doesn't match up to the reality. I mean, this thing has been in place now for 10 months, all right?

So let's look at what's happened over the last 10 months. Not only has the economy grown and added jobs since the Affordable Care Act became law, but small businesses across the country have already chosen to offer health care to hundreds of thousands of their employees, many for the first time. That's something that, regardless of politics, we should all celebrate.

Estimates from the Business Roundtable—now, this isn't some left-wing organization; the Business Roundtable, the organization of all the country's largest corporations—and other experts indicate that health insurance reform could save large employers anywhere from $2,000 to $3,000 per family, per year, that they cover in health care costs by 2019. And that's money that businesses can use to grow and invest and to hire. That's money that workers won't have to see vanish from their paychecks or bonuses in the form of higher deductibles or bigger copayments. That's good for all of us.

And I can report that granny is safe. [*Laughter*] In fact, grandma's Medicare is stronger than ever. And if she was one of the millions of seniors who fell into the doughnut hole last year, she received a $250 check, or soon will, to help her afford her medications, and a new 50-percent discount on brand-name drugs, as part of the Affordable Care Act.

Finally, because it is absolutely true that we've got to get a handle on our deficits, that the debt we are carrying right now is unsustainable if we don't start taking action, it is important for us to be clear about the truth when it comes to health care reform.

Health reform is part of deficit reform. We know that health care costs, including programs like Medicare and Medicaid, are the biggest contributors to our long-term deficit. Nobody disputes this. And this law will slow these costs. That's part of the reason why nonpartisan economists, why the Congressional Budget Office, have said that repealing this law would add a quarter of a trillion dollars to our deficit over the next decade and another trillion dollars to our deficit in the decade after that. They're not just making this up. And what's more, repeal would send middle class premiums up, would force large employers to pay that extra $2,000 to $3,000 per worker, and shift control of your health care right back to the insurance companies.

Now, I've repeatedly said I believe that our system of private insurance is strong and viable, and we need it to be. It saves lives. It employs large numbers of Americans. And by the way, it's still making pretty good profits. But just as we are a people who believe in the power of the individual, the promise of the free market, we are also a people who believe, from the time of our founding, that we aspire to protect one another from harm and exploitation.

Our task has always been to seek the right balance, between the dynamism of the marketplace, but also to make sure that it's serving people. And sometimes that means removing barriers to growth by lifting rules that place unnecessary burdens on business, but other times it means enacting commonsense safeguards like these—like the Affordable Care Act—to ensure our American belief that hard work and responsibility should be rewarded by a sense of security and fair play.

That's at the heart of this reform. That's why we fought so hard for this reform. That's why we have to keep on telling people across the country about the potential of this reform and what it means for them and their families. And that's why we're not going to fall back.

I don't want to tell students that we're booting them off their parents' coverage. I don't want to tell seniors that their medicine is out of reach again. I don't want to tell Janine her taxes are going back up, or Gail that she's got to choose between keeping her home and getting well. I don't want to tell Dawn or any other mother that their child can't get the care that he or she needs after all.

I don't want that for America. I don't want that for our families. That's not who we are,

and that's not what we stand for. We don't believe that people should have to hope against hope that they'll stay healthy or hang all their fortunes on chance. We don't believe, in a country like ours, that 1 in 10, 1 in 8 of our citizens should be that vulnerable no matter how hard they're working. We believe in something better.

So the time for fighting the battles of the last 2 years has now passed. It's time to move forward. And these efforts—strengthening our families, getting our fiscal house in order, allowing small businesses to grow, allowing entrepreneurs to strike out on their own free from crushing costs—they're critical to our economic success. And by reforming our health care system so it doesn't dictate anybody's economic fate, America can decide its own.

Now, as vital as this reform is, as committed as we are to getting our implementation right, to win the future in this new and changing world is going to require more from us. And I believe we're up to the task. I think that we can create the jobs of the future by fortifying our lead in innovation, including investing in biotechnology that can deliver new cures for crippling diseases. We can fill those jobs by guaranteeing all our children have the best skills and education possible. We can convince the businesses and industries of the 21st century to take root right here by building and deploying a new network of infrastructure.

We can bring down our deficits by taking responsibility, just as we've done in our own lives, to cut wasteful and excessive spending wherever we can find it. And we can restore our people's belief in our capacity to meet this moment by reforming our Government so it's smarter and nimbler and equal to our times.

We can do all these things. All of you believe we can do all these things, because just think back to where we were standing 4 years ago. Think of all the hard work and all the heart you put into a cause that you believed in for years—for years. And think of the feeling you had the moment your efforts finally paid off, that feeling when your faith was rewarded.

All of you are a reminder, you are proof of the fact that we are a people that can change our country for the better. And if all of us summon that spirit now, through all the hardships and the ups and downs and twists and turns, then I am absolutely convinced that our best days still lie ahead.

So I could not be prouder of you, Families USA. Thank you for your extraordinary work. Thank you, Ron. Let's keep on going. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:27 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill. In his remarks, he referred to Ron Pollack, executive director, Families USA.

Remarks on the Situation in Egypt
January 28, 2011

Good evening, everybody. My administration has been closely monitoring the situation in Egypt, and I know that we will be learning more tomorrow when day breaks. As the situation continues to unfold, our first concern is preventing injury or loss of life. So I want to be very clear in calling upon the Egyptian authorities to refrain from any violence against peaceful protestors.

The people of Egypt have rights that are universal. That includes the right to peaceful assembly and association, the right to free speech, and the ability to determine their own destiny. These are human rights, and the United States will stand up for them everywhere.

I also call upon the Egyptian Government to reverse the actions that they've taken to interfere with access to the Internet, to cell phone service, and to social networks that do so much to connect people in the 21st century.

At the same time, those protesting in the streets have a responsibility to express themselves peacefully. Violence and destruction will not lead to the reforms that they seek.

Now, going forward, this moment of volatility has to be turned into a moment of promise. The United States has a close partnership with Egypt, and we've cooperated on many issues, including working together to advance a more peaceful region. But we've also been clear that there must be reform—political, social, and economic reforms that meet the aspirations of the Egyptian people.

In the absence of these reforms, grievances have built up over time. When President Mubarak addressed the Egyptian people tonight, he pledged a better democracy and greater economic opportunity. I just spoke to him after his speech, and I told him he has a responsibility to give meaning to those words, to take concrete steps and actions that deliver on that promise.

Violence will not address the grievances of the Egyptian people, and suppressing ideas never succeeds in making them go away. What's needed right now are concrete steps that advance the rights of the Egyptian people: a meaningful dialogue between the Government and its citizens and a path of political change that leads to a future of greater freedom and greater opportunity and justice for the Egyptian people.

Now, ultimately, the future of Egypt will be determined by the Egyptian people. And I believe that the Egyptian people want the same things that we all want: a better life for ourselves and our children and a government that is fair and just and responsive. Put simply, the Egyptian people want a future that befits the heirs to a great and ancient civilization.

The United States always will be a partner in pursuit of that future. And we are committed to working with the Egyptian Government and the Egyptian people—all quarters—to achieve it.

Around the world, governments have an obligation to respond to their citizens. That's true here in the United States, that's true in Asia, it is true in Europe, it is true in Africa, and it's certainly true in the Arab world, where a new generation of citizens has the right to be heard.

When I was in Cairo, shortly after I was elected President, I said that all governments must maintain power through consent, not coercion. That is the single standard by which the people of Egypt will achieve the future they deserve.

Surely there will be difficult days to come. But the United States will continue to stand up for the rights of the Egyptian people and work with their Government in pursuit of a future that is more just, more free, and more hopeful.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:33 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

The President's Weekly Address
January 29, 2011

I'm speaking to you today from Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where I'm at an innovative company called Orion Energy Systems.

Just a few years ago, this was an empty warehouse. A major employer had shut down this factory, moved its operations abroad, and took a lot of jobs away from this town.

Today, this is a thriving enterprise once more. You're looking at part of a factory where 250 workers are building advanced clean energy systems, state-of-the-art technologies that use solar power and energy efficiency to save farms and businesses thousands of dollars on their utility bills.

I'm here because this business and others like it are showing us the way forward. And in the coming days, I'll be shining a spotlight on innovators across America who are relying on new technologies to create new jobs and opportunities in new industries.

That's what companies like Orion are doing, and that's how America will win the future: by outinnovating, outeducating, and outbuilding our competitors. We'll win the future by being

the best place on Earth to do business. That's what we're called to do at this moment. And in my State of the Union, I talked about how we get there.

It starts by making sure that every single child can get a good education and every American can afford college or career training, because that's what will help light the spark in the minds of innovators and ensure that our people have the skills to work for innovative companies.

We also need to make sure that America can move goods and information as fast as any of our competitors, whether on the road or online, because good infrastructure helps our businesses sell their products and services faster and cheaper.

We have to reform our Government and cut wasteful spending so that we eliminate what we don't need to pay for the investments we need to grow, like education and medical research.

As we can see here in Manitowoc, we need to ensure that we're promoting innovation, especially in promising areas like clean energy. This is going to be key to growing our economy and helping businesses create jobs. Orion, for example, was able to open with the help of small-business loans and incentives that are creating demand for clean energy technologies like wind power and solar panels.

That's why I've proposed a bigger tax credit for the research that companies do. And to give these companies the certainty of knowing there will be a market for what they sell, I set this goal for America: By 2035, 80 percent of electricity should come from clean energy.

This is going to help spark innovation at businesses across America. This is going to spur new products and technologies. This is going to lead to good, new jobs. And that's how we win the future, by unleashing the talent and ingenuity of American businesses and American workers in every corner of this country.

So to those who say that America's best days are behind them, let them come here, to Manitowoc. Let them come to this once-shuttered factory that is now bustling with workers building new technologies for the world. Let them come here to see the incredible promise of our country. This is the future, and it is bright.

Thanks.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:10 p.m. on January 26 at Orion Energy Systems, Inc., in Manitowoc, WI, for broadcast on January 29. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 28, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 29.

Remarks on the Situation in Egypt
February 1, 2011

Good evening, everybody. Over the past few days, the American people have watched the situation unfolding in Egypt. We've seen enormous demonstrations by the Egyptian people. We've borne witness to the beginning of a new chapter in the history of a great country and a long-time partner of the United States.

And my administration has been in close contact with our Egyptian counterparts and a broad range of the Egyptian people, as well as others across the region and across the globe. And throughout this period, we've stood for a set of core principles.

First, we oppose violence. And I want to commend the Egyptian military for the professionalism and patriotism that it has shown thus far in allowing peaceful protests while protecting the Egyptian people. We've seen tanks covered with banners and soldiers and protesters embracing in the streets. And going forward, I urge the military to continue its efforts to help ensure that this time of change is peaceful.

Second, we stand for universal values, including the rights of the Egyptian people to

freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, and the freedom to access information. Once more, we've seen the incredible potential for technology to empower citizens and the dignity of those who stand up for a better future. And going forward, the United States will continue to stand up for democracy and the universal rights that all human beings deserve, in Egypt and around the world.

Third, we have spoken out on behalf of the need for change. After his speech tonight, I spoke directly to President Mubarak. He recognizes that the status quo is not sustainable and that a change must take place. Indeed, all of us who are privileged to serve in positions of political power do so at the will of our people. Through thousands of years, Egypt has known many moments of transformation. The voices of the Egyptian people tell us that this is one of those moments, this is one of those times.

Now, it is not the role of any other country to determine Egypt's leaders. Only the Egyptian people can do that. What is clear—and what I indicated tonight to President Mubarak—is my belief that an orderly transition must be meaningful, it must be peaceful, and it must begin now.

Furthermore, the process must include a broad spectrum of Egyptian voices and opposition parties. It should lead to elections that are free and fair. And it should result in a government that's not only grounded in democratic principles, but is also responsive to the aspirations of the Egyptian people.

Throughout this process, the United States will continue to extend the hand of partnership and friendship to Egypt. And we stand ready to provide any assistance that is necessary to help the Egyptian people as they manage the aftermath of these protests.

Over the last few days, the passion and the dignity that has been demonstrated by the people of Egypt has been an inspiration to people around the world, including here in the United States, and to all those who believe in the inevitability of human freedom.

To the people of Egypt, particularly the young people of Egypt, I want to be clear: We hear your voices. I have an unyielding belief that you will determine your own destiny and seize the promise of a better future for your children and your grandchildren. And I say that as someone who is committed to a partnership between the United States and Egypt.

There will be difficult days ahead. Many questions about Egypt's future remain unanswered. But I am confident that the people of Egypt will find those answers. That truth can be seen in the sense of community in the streets. It can be seen in the mothers and fathers embracing soldiers. And it can be seen in the Egyptians who linked arms to protect the national museum: a new generation protecting the treasures of antiquity, a human chain connecting a great and ancient civilization to the promise of a new day.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:44 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House.

Statement on the Observance of the Lunar New Year
February 2, 2011

I send my best wishes to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and all who celebrate the Lunar New Year across the United States and around the world.

As people of all cultures and faiths welcome in the new year, let all of us celebrate our families and our ancestors and enjoy the company of our loved ones. Across America, in large cities and in small towns, many will mark this occasion with festive celebrations. Many Americans of Asian descent will carry on the rich traditions of their heritage, reminding us again that

America's strength comes from the richness of our cultures and the diversity of our people.

I wish all who celebrate the new year peace, prosperity, and good health.

Letter to Senate Leadership on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
February 2, 2011

Dear Mr. Chairman: (Dear Senator:)

I am pleased to transmit, in response to Condition 6 of the New START Treaty Resolution of Advice and Consent to Ratification of December 22, 2010, the Report on Conventional Prompt Global Strike. I look forward to continuing to work with you and the Committee as we implement the New START Treaty.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John F. Kerry, chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs; and Carl M. Levin, chairman, and John S. McCain III, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services.

Message to the Senate on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
February 2, 2011

To the Senate of the United States:

I have considered the United States Senate's December 22, 2010, Resolution of Advice and Consent to Ratification of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed in Prague on April 8, 2010, with Protocol, including Annexes (the "New START Treaty"; Treaty Document 111–5), and I hereby certify that:

1. United States National Technical Means, in conjunction with the verification activities provided for in the New START Treaty, are sufficient to ensure effective monitoring of Russian compliance with the provisions of the New START Treaty and timely warning of any Russian preparation to break out of the limits in Article II of the New START Treaty.

2. The New START Treaty does not require, at any point during which it will be in force, the United States to provide to the Russian Federation telemetric information under Article IX of the New START Treaty, Part Seven of the Protocol, and the Annex on Telemetric Information to the Protocol for the launch of (a) any missile defense interceptor, as defined in paragraph 44 of Part One of the Protocol to the New START Treaty; (b) any satellite launches, missile defense sensor targets, and missile defense intercept targets, the launch of which uses the first stage of an existing type of United States intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) or submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) listed in paragraph 8 of Article III of the New START Treaty; or (c) any missile described in clause (a) of paragraph 7 of Article III of the New START Treaty.

3. I intend to (a) modernize or replace the triad of strategic nuclear delivery systems: a heavy bomber and air-launched cruise missile, an ICBM, and a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) and SLBM; and (b) maintain the United States rocket motor industrial base.

4. (a) The United States will seek to initiate, following consultation with NATO Allies but not later than 1 year after the entry into force of the New START Treaty, negotiations with the Russian Federation on an agreement to address the disparity between the non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons stockpiles of the Russian Federation and of the United States and to secure and reduce tactical nuclear weapons in a verifiable manner; and (b) it is the policy of the United States that such negotiations shall not include defensive missile systems.

5. I intend to (a) accelerate, to the extent possible, the design and engineering phase of the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement (CMRR) building and the Uranium Processing Facility (UPF); and (b) request full funding, including on a multi-year basis as appropriate, for the CMRR building and the UPF upon completion of the design and engineering phase for such facilities.

6. It is the policy of the United States to continue development and deployment of United States missile defense systems to defend against missile threats from nations such as North Korea and Iran, including qualitative and quantitative improvements to such systems. As stated in the resolution, such systems include all phases of the Phased Adaptive Approach to missile defenses in Europe, the modernization of the Ground-Based Midcourse Defense system, and the continued development of the two-stage Ground-Based Interceptor as a technological and strategic hedge. As I stated in my letter to the Senate of December 18, 2010, the United States believes that these systems do not and will not threaten the strategic balance with the Russian Federation. Consequently, while the United States cannot circumscribe the sovereign rights of the Russian Federation under paragraph 3 of Article XIV of the Treaty, the United States believes continued improvement and deployment of United States missile defense systems do not constitute a basis for questioning the effectiveness and viability of the Treaty, and therefore would not give rise to circumstances justifying the withdrawal of the Russian Federation from the Treaty.

The report called for in the sixth Condition of the Resolution will be provided under separate cover to the Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
February 2, 2011.

Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast
February 3, 2011

Thank you so much. To the cochairs, Jeff and Ann; to all the Members of Congress who are here; the distinguished guests who've traveled so far to be here this morning; to Randall for your wonderful stories and powerful prayer; to all who are here providing testimony: Thank you so much for having me and Michelle here. We are blessed to be here.

I want to begin by just saying a word to Mark Kelly who's here. We have been praying for Mark's wife, Gabby Giffords, for many days now. But I want Gabby and Mark and their entire family to know that we are with them for the long haul, and God is with them for the long haul.

And even as we pray for Gabby in the aftermath of a tragedy here at home, we're also mindful of the violence that we're now seeing in the Middle East, and we pray that the violence in Egypt will end and that the rights and aspirations of the Egyptian people will be realized and that a better day will dawn over Egypt and throughout the world.

For almost 60 years, going back to President Eisenhower, this gathering has been attended by our President. It's a tradition that I'm proud to uphold not only as a fellow believer, but as an elected leader whose entry into public service was actually through the church. This may come as a surprise, for as some of you know, I did not come from a particularly religious family. My father, who I barely knew—I only met once for a month in my entire life—was said to be a nonbeliever throughout his life.

My mother, whose parents were Baptist and Methodist, grew up with a certain skepticism about organized religion, and she usually only took me to church on Easter and Christmas—sometimes. And yet my mother was also one of the most spiritual people that I ever knew. She was somebody who was instinctively guided by the Golden Rule and who nagged me constantly about the homespun values of

her Kansas upbringing, values like honesty and hard work and kindness and fair play.

And it's because of her that I came to understand the equal worth of all men and all women and the imperatives of an ethical life and the necessity to act on your beliefs. And it's because of her example and guidance that despite the absence of a formal religious upbringing, my earliest inspirations for a life of service ended up being the faith leaders of the civil rights movement.

There was, of course, Martin Luther King and the Baptist leaders, the ways in which they helped those who had been subjugated to make a way out of no way and transform a nation through the force of love. But there were also Catholic leaders like Father Theodore Heshburgh and Jewish leaders like Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, Muslim leaders and Hindu leaders. Their call to fix what was broken in our world, a call rooted in faith, is what led me just a few years out of college to sign up as a community organizer for a group of churches on the South Side of Chicago. And it was through that experience working with pastors and laypeople, trying to heal the wounds of hurting neighborhoods, that I came to know Jesus Christ for myself and embrace Him as my Lord and Savior.

Now, that was over 20 years ago. And like all of us, my faith journey has had its twists and turns. It hasn't always been a straight line. I have thanked God for the joys of parenthood and Michelle's willingness to put up with me. [*Laughter*] In the wake of failures and disappointments, I've questioned what God had in store for me and been reminded that God's plans for us may not always match our own shortsighted desires.

And let me tell you, these past 2 years, they have deepened my faith. [*Laughter*] The Presidency has a funny way of making a person feel the need to pray. [*Laughter*] Abe Lincoln said, as many of you know, "I have been driven to my knees many times by the overwhelming conviction that I had no place else to go." [*Laughter*]

Fortunately, I'm not alone in my prayers. Pastor friends like Joel Hunter and T.D. Jakes come over to the Oval Office every once in a while to pray with me and pray for the Nation. The chapel at Camp David has provided consistent respite and fellowship. The Director of our Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships office, Joshua DuBois—a young minister himself—he starts my morning off with meditations from Scripture.

Most of all, I've got friends around the country—some who I know, some who I don't know, but I know they're friends—who are out there praying for me. One of them is an old friend named Kaye Wilson. In our family we call her Mama Kaye, and she happens to be Malia and Sasha's godmother. And she has organized prayer circles for me all around the country. She started small with her own Bible study group, but once I started running for President and she heard what they were saying about me on cable, she felt the need to pray harder. [*Laughter*] By the time I was elected President, she says, "I just couldn't keep up on my own." [*Laughter*] "I was having to pray eight, nine times a day just for you." [*Laughter*] So she enlisted help from around the country.

It's also comforting to know that people are praying for you who don't always agree with you. Tom Coburn, for example, is here. He is not only a dear friend, but also a brother in Christ. We came into the Senate at the same time. Even though we are on opposite sides of a whole bunch of issues, part of what has bound us together is a shared faith, a recognition that we pray to and serve the same God. And I keep praying that God will show him the light and he will vote with me once in a while. [*Laughter*] It's going to happen, Tom. [*Laughter*] A ray of light is going to beam down. [*Laughter*]

My Christian faith, then, has been a sustaining force for me over these last few years. All the more so, when Michelle and I hear our faith questioned from time to time, we are reminded that, ultimately, what matters is not what other people say about us, but whether we're being true to our conscience and true to our God. "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well."

As I travel across the country, folks often ask me what is it that I pray for. And like most of you, my prayers sometimes are general: "Lord, give me the strength to meet the challenges of my office." Sometimes, they're specific: "Lord, give me patience as I watch Malia go to her first dance—[*laughter*]—where there will be boys." [*Laughter*] "Lord, have that skirt get longer as she travels to that dance." [*Laughter*]

But while I petition God for a whole range of things, there are a few common themes that do recur. The first category of prayer comes out of the urgency of the Old Testament prophets and the Gospel itself. I pray for my ability to help those who are struggling. Christian tradition teaches that one day the world will be turned right side up and everything will return as it should be. But until that day, we're called to work on behalf of a God that chose justice and mercy and compassion to the most vulnerable.

We've seen a lot of hardship these past 2 years. Not a day passes when I don't get a letter from somebody or meet someone who's out of work or lost their home or without health care. The story Randall told about his father—that's a story that a whole lot of Americans have gone through over these past couple of years.

Sometimes, I can't help right away. But sometimes, what I can do to try to improve the economy or to curb foreclosures or to help deal with the health care system—sometimes, it seems so distant and so remote, so profoundly inadequate to the enormity of the need. And it is my faith, then, that biblical injunction to serve the least of these, that keeps me going and that keeps me from being overwhelmed. It's faith that reminds me that despite being just one very imperfect man, I can still help whoever I can, however I can, wherever I can, for as long as I can, and that somehow God will buttress these efforts.

It also helps to know that none of us are alone in answering this call. It's being taken up each and every day by so many of you—back home, your churches, your temples and synagogues, your fellow congregants—so many faith groups across this great country of ours.

I came upon a group recently called "charity: water," a group that supports clean water projects overseas. This is a project that was started by a former nightclub promoter named Scott Harrison, who grew weary of living only for himself and feeling like he wasn't following Christ as well as he should.

And because of Scott's good work, "charity: water" has helped 1.7 million people get access to clean water. And in the next 10 years, he plans to make clean water accessible to a hundred million more. That's the kind of promoting we need more of, and that's the kind of faith that moves mountains. And there's stories like that scattered across this room of people who've taken it upon themselves to make a difference.

Now, sometimes, faith groups can do the work of caring for the least of these on their own; sometimes, they need a partner, whether it's in business or government. And that's why my administration has taken a fresh look at the way we organize with faith groups, the way we work with faith groups through our Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

And through that office, we're expanding the way faith groups can partner with our Government. We're helping them feed more kids who otherwise would go hungry. We're helping fatherhood groups get dads the support they need to be there for their children. We're working with nonprofits to improve the lives of people around the world. And we're doing it in ways that are aligned with our constitutional principles. And in this work, we intend to expand it in the days ahead, rooted in the notions of partnership and justice and the imperatives to help the poor.

Of course, there are some needs that require more resources than faith groups have at their disposal. There's only so much a church can do to help all the families in need, all those who need help making a mortgage payment or avoiding foreclosure or making sure their child can go to college. There's only so much that a nonprofit can do to help a community rebuild in the wake of disaster. There's only so much the private sector will do to help folks who are desperately sick get the care that they need.

And that's why I continue to believe that in a caring and in a just society, government must have a role to play; that our values, our love, and our charity must find expression not just in our families, not just in our places of work and our places of worship, but also in our Government and in our politics.

Over the past 2 years, the nature of these obligations, the proper role of government has obviously been the subject of enormous controversy. And the debates have been fierce as one side's version of compassion and community may be interpreted by the other side as an oppressive and irresponsible expansion of the state or an unacceptable restriction on individual freedom.

And that's why a second recurring theme in my prayers is a prayer for humility. Now, God answered this prayer for me early on by having me marry Michelle. [*Laughter*] Because whether it's reminding me of a chore undone or questioning the wisdom of watching my third football game in a row on Sunday, she keeps me humble. [*Laughter*]

But in this life of politics, when debates have become so bitterly polarized and changes in the media lead so many of us just to listen to those who reinforce our existing biases, it's useful to go back to Scripture to remind ourselves that none of us has all the answers—none of us—no matter what our political party or our station in life.

The full breadth of human knowledge is like a grain of sand in God's hands. And there are some mysteries in this world we cannot fully comprehend. As it's written in Job: "God's voice thunders in marvelous ways. He does great things beyond our understandings."

The challenge I find, then, is to balance this uncertainty, this humility, with the need to fight for deeply held convictions, to be open to other points of view but firm in our core principles. And I pray for this wisdom every day.

I pray that God will show me and all of us the limits of our understanding and open our ears and our hearts to our brothers and sisters with different points of view, that such reminders of our shared hopes and our shared dreams and our shared limitations as children of God will reveal the way forward that we can travel together.

And the last recurring theme, one that binds all prayers together, is that I might walk closer with God and make that walk my first and most important task.

In our own lives, it's easy to be consumed by our daily worries and our daily concerns. And it is even easier at a time when everybody is busy, everybody is stressed, and everybody—our culture—is obsessed with wealth and power and celebrity. And often it takes a brush with hardship or tragedy to shake us out of that, to remind us of what matters most.

We see an aging parent wither under a long illness, or we lose a daughter or a husband in Afghanistan, we watch a gunman open fire in a supermarket, and we remember how fleeting life can be. And we ask ourselves how have we treated others, whether we've told our family and friends how much we love them. And it's in these moments, when we feel most intensely our mortality and our own flaws and the sins of the world, that we most desperately seek to touch the face of God.

So my prayer this morning is that we might seek His face not only in those moments, but each and every day; that every day as we go through the hustle and bustle of our lives, whether it's in Washington or Hollywood or anywhere in between, that we might every so often rise above the here and now, and kneel before the Eternal; that we might remember, Kaye, the fact that those who wait on the Lord will soar on wings like eagles, and they will run and not be weary, and they will walk and not faint.

When I wake in the morning, I wait on the Lord, and I ask Him to give me the strength to do right by our country and its people. And when I go to bed at night, I wait on the Lord, and I ask Him to forgive me my sins and look after my family and the American people and make me an instrument of His will.

I say these prayers hoping they will be answered, and I say these prayers knowing that I must work and must sacrifice and must serve to see them answered. But I also say these prayers knowing that the act of prayer itself is a source of strength. It's a reminder that our

time on Earth is not just about us, that when we open ourselves to the possibility that God might have a larger purpose for our lives, there's a chance that somehow, in ways that we may never fully know, God will use us well.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, and may He bless this country that we love.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 a.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Jefferson B. Miller and former Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, cochairs of the National Prayer Breakfast; and screenwriter Randall Wallace.

Remarks at Pennsylvania State University in University Park, Pennsylvania
February 3, 2011

The President. Thank you, Nittany Lions! Thank you. Thank you so much. Please have a seat. Have a seat.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. Oh, I love you back. Thank you. It's great to be here. It is good to be back in Happy Valley. It's good to be back at Penn State. I want to say, first of all, thank you to Graham Spanier, your president; Elizabeth Goreham, the mayor of State College. Congressman Glenn Thompson is here.

I met this guy—I hadn't heard of him before, but apparently, he coaches your football team—Joe Paterno is in the house.

And one last introduction I want to make. Some of you know I have these military aides. They go with me everywhere. They're from each branch of our Armed Services. They're the ones who carry the football. You've heard of that? So they're really important guys. Well, it just so happens that the military aide with me today is Mr. Sam Price, lieutenant colonel in the Air Force, happens to be Penn State class of '95. So I want to—[*applause*]—Lieutenant Price, right here. So we've got some Lions who are taking care of business on Air Force One as well as here on campus.

Now, last week, I visited a small town in Wisconsin that was right next to Green Bay. So in the spirit of fairness, I've come to Pennsylvania, not too far from the center of Steeler Nation, to wish Steelers fans good luck in the Super Bowl too.

Two years ago, I stole one of the team's owners, Dan Rooney, to be our Ambassador to Ireland. So I've got some love for the Steelers. I also am aware, though, that this State splits up a little bit, so I suspect there may be a few Eagles fans. You're with us Bears fans—[*laughter*]—sitting at home, watching. [*Laughter*]

But that small town in Wisconsin and the Borough of State College have something else in common besides championship football teams. These are places where the future will be won. These are the places where the new jobs and the world's best businesses will take root, right here in State College, right here in Pennsylvania.

And in the short term, obviously, we've got to focus on the devastation that occurred because of this recession over the last 2 years. And the best thing we can do to speed up economic growth is to make sure that people and businesses have more money to spend. And that's exactly what the tax cut that we passed in December is doing. Because Democrats and Republicans came together, Americans' paychecks will be a little bit bigger this year and businesses will be able to write off their investments and companies will grow and jobs will be created. That's all good in the short term.

But the reason I wanted to come here to Penn State is to talk about the long term. The reason I wanted to talk to young people is to talk about the future and how we're going to win it.

If we want to make up for the millions of jobs that were lost in this recession, but more importantly, if we want to make sure that America is still a place where you can make it if you try, where you can go as far as hard work and big dreams will take you, then we're going to have to make some serious decisions about our long-term economic health at a time when we're facing stiff competition from other nations for jobs and industries of our time.

And I know every young person here feels that pressure. You understand that it's not going to be a cakewalk, this competition for the future, which means all of us are going to have to up our game. We are going to have to win the future by being smarter and working harder and working together. If we want those jobs and businesses to thrive in the United States of America, we're going to have to outinnovate and outeducate and outbuild the rest of the world. That's what we're going to have to do.

That means investing in cutting-edge research and technology. It means investing in the skills and training of our people. It means investing in transportation and communication networks that can move goods and information as fast as possible. And to make room for these investments, it means cutting whatever spending we just can't afford.

So I've proposed that we freeze annual domestic spending for the next 5 years, which will reduce the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade and will bring annual domestic spending to the lowest share of our economy since Eisenhower was President, meaning since way before most of you were born. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. He said, "Not me." [*Laughter*]

Now, just like Americans do every day, Government has a responsibility to live within its means. But we also have a responsibility to invest in those areas that are going to have the biggest impact. And in this century, those areas are education and infrastructure and innovation. And that last area, innovation, is why I've come to Penn State today.

Innovation is what this country is all about. Sparking the imagination and creativity of our people, unleashing new discoveries, that's what America does better than any other country on Earth. That's what we do. And this innovation has always been driven by individual scientists and entrepreneurs. I was up in Schenectady, New York, the other day at the GE plant that was Thomas Edison's original plant. And anywhere you go in the country, you will find inventors and businesses that created products that are now sent all around the world. But innovation has also flourished because we as a nation have invested in the success of these individual entrepreneurs, these inventors, these scientists.

In this country, from the moment you have a new idea, you can explore it in the world's best labs and universities, you can develop it with a research grant, you can protect it with a patent, you can market it with a loan to start a new business. You've got a chain that takes a great idea all the way through, and that's something that we as a nation have always invested in. It's how we as a people have advanced ideas from the earliest stages of research to the point where you can hand it off and let the private sector run with the ball. It's how investments in basic research led to things like the computer chip and GPS and millions of good jobs.

So in America, innovation isn't just how we change our lives, it's how we make a living. And to support American innovation, what my administration is trying to do is not just hand out money. What we're doing is we're issuing a challenge. Because right now some of the most promising innovation is happening in the area of clean energy technology, technology that is creating jobs, reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and—something that every young person here cares about—making sure our planet is a healthier place to live that we can pass on to future generations.

So we're telling scientists, and we're telling engineers all across the country, that if they assemble teams of the best minds in their fields and focus on tackling the biggest obstacles to clean, abundant, and affordable energy, then we're going to get behind their work. We as a country will invest in them. We'll get them all in one place, and we'll support their research. And we call these places energy innovation hubs.

At Caltech, they're developing a way to turn sunlight and water into fuel for cars. [*Applause*] You like that. At Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, they're using supercomputers to find ways of getting much more power out of nuclear facilities.

And right here, right here at Penn State, a university whose motto is "Making life better,"

you've answered the call. So today, you are preparing to lead the way on a hub that will make America home to the most energy-efficient buildings in the world.

Now, that may not sound too sexy until—[*laughter*]—energy-efficient buildings. [*Laughter*] But listen, our homes and our businesses consume 40 percent of the energy we use. Think about that. Everybody focuses on cars and gas prices, and that's understandable. But our homes and our businesses use 40 percent of the energy. They contribute to 40 percent of the carbon pollution that we produce and that is contributing to climate change. It costs us billions of dollars in energy bills. They waste huge amounts of energy.

So the good news is, we can change all that. Making our buildings more energy efficient is one of the fastest, easiest, and cheapest ways to save money, combat pollution, and create jobs right here in the United States of America. And that's what we're going to do.

So that's what this energy innovation hub based in Philadelphia is going to be all about. You will help make America a world leader in innovative designs for cost-effective, energy-efficient buildings, from lighting to windows, from heating to cooling—all of it.

This is where we need you to push the envelope and ask just how efficient can our buildings be. Can they be self-sufficient, producing just as much energy as they consume? What new discoveries can we make? And soon you'll have a new place to answer these questions, a clean energy campus in the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

Now, this campus will be the product of a true collaboration. What, Penn State, you have done is develop an innovative model for how to do research. Government pulled resources from across different agencies to support your effort, from programs that train new workers and new skills to loans for small businesses that will grow from your breakthroughs.

Private sectors are already pitching in to help. So IBM is providing supercomputers. Bayer MaterialScience is providing materials for insulation and facades that save energy. PPG Industries is providing walls that reflect sunlight and windows that reflect infrared. Building this campus will support jobs in all of these businesses, and the discoveries made on this campus will lead to even more jobs: jobs in engineering, jobs in manufacturing, jobs in construction, jobs in installation, jobs in retail.

And they'll be more than jobs that help support families, they'll be jobs with a national purpose: jobs that make our economy smarter, jobs that make our planet safer, jobs that maintain America's competitive edge in the 21st century.

Now, as any scientist will tell you, it's often a challenge to commercialize research. So you come up with a great idea, but moving that new discovery from theory to practice or from the lab to the marketplace, that's a challenge. So that's why today, here at Penn State, I'm announcing what we're calling the Better Buildings Initiative, and it's a plan to dramatically improve the energy efficiency of America's businesses over the next decade.

So by reaching this goal, we could save America's businesses nearly $40 billion a year in their utility bills. Think about that: $40 billion. That's money that could be spent growing those businesses and hiring new workers.

And I'll just take one extreme example: the Empire State Building. Right now its owners are investing in renovations that will reduce their energy consumption, and this investment will soon pay for itself and save them $4.4 million a year in energy costs—that one building.

Now, granted, it's a big building—[*laughter*]—so most buildings aren't as big. They're not going to use as much energy as the Empire State Building. But what we're saying to people is, if you're willing to make your buildings more energy efficient, we'll provide new tax credits and financing opportunities for you to do so.

And this plan would build on the Home Star program we proposed last year, which would have provided rebates of up to $3,000 for homeowners to make their own homes more energy efficient. And these are upgrades that could save families hundreds of dollars each year in energy costs.

See, the problem for both homeowners and businesses is, they'll recover the money that they make by lowering their utility bills, but they may not have the cash up front. And if we can provide you—if we can provide the American people—an incentive, you'll recover that money. You'll get it back. And in the meantime, we're making our entire economy more efficient. So steps like these also can boost manufacturing and private sector jobs.

So over the last 2 years, we've offered similar incentives for cities and companies and clean energy manufacturers that wanted to help America become more energy efficient. I'll give you a couple examples. In Maryland, our program helped an energy-saving window manufacturer boost business by 55 percent. In North Carolina, there's a company that makes energy-efficient lighting, hired hundreds of new workers. A company that manufacturers LEDs just down the road from here in Altoona saw their business increase by a million bucks.

We're also going to support State and local governments who come up with the best ideas to make energy-efficient buildings the norm. So you show us the best ideas to change your game on the ground, we'll show you the money. We will show you the money, States and local government.

To get the private sector to lead by example, I'm also issuing a challenge to CEOs, to labor, to building owners, to hospitals, universities, and others to join us.

Now, tax credits mean lost revenue for Treasury. It costs money. And since we've got big deficits, we've got to pay for it. So to pay for it, I've asked Congress to eliminate the billions in taxpayer dollars that we currently give to oil companies. They are doing just fine on their own. [*Laughter*] So it's time to stop subsidizing yesterday's energy; it's time to invest in tomorrow's. It's time to win the future. That's what our project is.

Now, Penn State is a place that knows a little bit about playing to win. Last I counted, Coach Paterno has got more than 400 wins under his belt. But your Nation needs to win too. We need you to be as proud of what you do in the lab as you are of what your football team does on the field. We need you to seek breakthroughs and new technologies that we can't even imagine yet. And especially the young people who are here, we need you to act with a sense of urgency, to study and work and create as if the fate of the country depends on you, because it does. It depends on you.

And if we're harnessing all the energy in this room, all the young people in this audience, then I'm confident we'll do it. We can do this because what this university is going to lead will be more than a pioneering research center or an economic engine for Pennsylvania and America for years to come. What you're going to do is lead a modern-day incubator for what sets us apart, the greatest force that the world has ever known, and that is the American idea.

If you remember that and keep breaking new ground, if we as a country keep investing in you, I'm absolutely confident that America will win the future in this century, just like we did in the last.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada
February 4, 2011

President Obama. Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

I am very pleased to be welcoming my great friend and partner, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, back to the White House to reaffirm our extraordinary friendship and cooperation between the United States and Canada. I'd like to talk a bit about what we accomplished today and then address the situation unfolding in Egypt.

The United States and Canada are not simply allies, not simply neighbors; we are woven together like perhaps no other two countries in the world. We're bound together by our societies, by our economies, by our families—which reminds me, my brother-in-law's birthday is today, and I have to call him. [*Laughter*]

And in our many meetings together, I've come to value Stephen's candor and his focus on getting results, both when it comes to our two countries and to meeting global challenges. Although I, unfortunately, have not yet had the pleasure of seeing him and his band jam to the Rolling Stones, but I'm told the videos have become a sensation on YouTube. So I'll be checking those out after this bilateral. [*Laughter*]

We've had a very successful day. Our focus has been on how we increase jobs and economic growth on both sides of the border. Canada is our largest trading partner and the top destination for American exports, supporting some 1.7 million jobs here. So today we've agreed to several important steps to increase trade, improve our competitiveness, and create jobs for both our people.

First, we agreed to a new vision for managing our shared responsibilities, not just at the border, but beyond the border. That means working more closely to improve border security with better screening, new technologies, and information sharing among law enforcement, as well as identifying threats early. It also means finding new ways to improve the free flow of goods and people. Because with over a billion dollars in trade crossing the border every single day, smarter border management is key to our competitiveness, our job creation, and my goal of doubling U.S. exports.

And, Mr. Prime Minister, I thank you for your leadership and commitment to reaching this agreement.

We've directed our teams to develop an action plan to move forward quickly, and I'm confident that we're going to get this done so that our shared border enhances our shared prosperity.

Second, we're launching a new effort to get rid of outdated regulations that stifle trade and job creation. Like the Governmentwide review that I ordered last month, we need to obviously strike the right balance, protecting our public health and safety and making it easier and less expensive for Americans and Canadians to trade and do business, for example, in the auto industry. And a new council that we're creating today will help make that happen.

Third, we discussed a wide range of ways to promote trade and investment, from clean energy partnerships to the steps Canada can take to strengthen intellectual property rights.

And we discussed a range of common security challenges, including Afghanistan, where our forces serve and sacrifice together. Today I want to thank Prime Minister Harper for Canada's decision to shift its commitment to focus on training Afghan forces. As we agreed with our Lisbon—or our NATO and coalition allies in Lisbon, the transition to Afghan lead for security will begin this year, and Canada's contribution will be critical to achieving that mission and keeping both our countries safe.

Finally, we discussed our shared commitment to progress with our partners in the Americas, including greater security cooperation. And I especially appreciated the Prime Minister's perspective on the region as I prepare for my trip to Central and South America next month.

Let me close by saying a few words about the situation in Egypt. This is obviously still a fluid situation, and we're monitoring it closely. So I'll make just a few points.

First, we continue to be crystal clear that we oppose violence as a response to this crisis. In recent days, we've seen violence and harassment erupt on the streets of Egypt that violates human rights, universal values, and international norms. So we are sending a strong and unequivocal message: Attacks on reporters are unacceptable, attacks on human rights activists are unacceptable, attacks on peaceful protesters are unacceptable.

The Egyptian Government has a responsibility to protect the rights of its people. Those demonstrating also have a responsibility to do so peacefully. But everybody should recognize a simple truth: The issues at stake in Egypt will

not be resolved through violence or suppression. And we are encouraged by the restraint that was shown today. We hope that it continues.

Second, the future of Egypt will be determined by its people. It's also clear that there needs to be a transition process that begins now. That transition must initiate a process that respects the universal rights of the Egyptian people and that leads to free and fair elections.

The details of this transition will be worked out by Egyptians. And my understanding is that some discussions have begun. But we are consulting widely within Egypt and with the international community to communicate our strong belief that a successful and orderly transition must be meaningful. Negotiations should include a broad representation of the Egyptian opposition, and this transition must address the legitimate grievances of those who seek a better future.

Third, we want to see this moment of turmoil turn into a moment of opportunity. The entire world is watching. What we hope for and what we will work for is a future where all of Egyptian society seizes that opportunity. Right now a great and ancient civilization is going through a time of tumult and transformation. And even as there are grave challenges and great uncertainty, I am confident that the Egyptian people can shape the future that they deserve. And as they do, they will continue to have a strong friend and partner in the United States of America.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Harper. Well, first of all, thank you, Barack. Both thank you for your friendship, both personal and national, and thank you for all the work you've done and all of your people have done to bring us to our announcement today.

[*At this point, Prime Minister Harper spoke in French. He then provided an English translation of his remarks, as follows.*]

And I will just repeat that.

Today President Obama and I are issuing a declaration on our border, but it is, of course, much more than that. It is a declaration on our relationship. Over the past nearly 200 years, our two countries have progressively developed the closest, warmest, most integrated, and most successful relationship in the world. We are partners, neighbors, allies, and most of all, we are true friends.

In an age of expanding opportunities, but also of grave dangers, we share fundamental interests and values just as we face common challenges and threats.

At the core of this friendship is the largest bilateral trading relationship in history. And since the signing of the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement, a milestone in the development of the modern era of globalization, that partnership has grown spectacularly.

Not only is the U.S. Canada's major export market, Canada is also America's largest export market: larger than China, larger than Mexico, larger than Japan, larger than all the countries of the European Union combined. Eight million jobs in the United States are supported by your trade with Canada. And Canada is the largest, the most secure, the most stable, and the friendliest supplier of that most vital of all America's purchases: energy.

It is in both our interests to ensure that our common border remains open and efficient, but it is just as critical that it remains secure and in the hands of the vigilant and the dedicated. Just as we must continually work to ensure that inertia and bureaucratic sclerosis do not impair the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services across our border, so too, we must up our game to counter those seeking new ways to harm us.

And I say "us" because as I have said before, a threat to the United States is a threat to Canada: to our trade, to our interests, to our values, to our common civilization. Canada has no friends among America's enemies, and America has no better friend than Canada.

The declaration President Obama and I are issuing today commits our governments to find new ways to exclude terrorists and criminals who pose a threat to our peoples. It also commits us to finding ways to eliminate regulatory barriers to cross-border trade and travel, because simpler

rules lead to lower costs for business and consumers and ultimately to more jobs.

Shared information, joint planning, compatible procedures, and inspection technology will all be key tools. They make possible the effective risk management that will allow us to accelerate legitimate flows of people and goods between our countries while strengthening our physical security and economic competitiveness.

So we commit to expanding our management of the border to the concept of a North American perimeter, not to replace or eliminate the border, but, where possible, to streamline and decongest it.

There is much work to do. The declaration marks the start of this endeavor, not the end; an ambitious agenda between two countries, sovereign and able to act independently when we so choose, according to our own laws and aspirations, but always understanding this, that while a border defines two peoples, it need not divide them. That is the fundamental truth to which Canadians and Americans have borne witness for almost two centuries. And through our mutual devotion to freedom, democracy, and justice at home and abroad, it is the example we seek to demonstrate for all others.

President Obama. All right, we've got time for a couple of questions. I'm going to start with Alister Bull [Reuters].

Egypt/Energy

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Is it conceivable to you that a genuine process of democratic reform can begin in Egypt while President Mubarak remains in power, or do you think his stepping aside is needed for reform even to begin?

And to Prime Minister Harper, on the energy issue, did you discuss Canada's role as a secure source of oil for the United States, and in particular, did you receive any assurances the U.S. administration looks favorably on TransCanada's proposed Keystone Pipeline to the Gulf Coast? Thank you.

President Obama. I have had two conversations with President Mubarak since this crisis in Egypt began, and each time I've emphasized the fact that the future of Egypt is going to be in the hands of Egyptians. It is not us who will determine that future. But I have also said that in light of what's happened over the last 2 weeks, going back to the old ways is not going to work. Suppression is not going to work. Engaging in violence is not going to work. Attempting to shut down information flows is not going to work.

In order for Egypt to have a bright future, which I believe it can have, the only thing that will work is moving a orderly transition process that begins right now, that engages all the parties, that leads to democratic practices, fair and free elections, a representative government that is responsive to the grievances of the Egyptian people.

Now, I believe that President Mubarak cares about his country. He is proud, but he's also a patriot. And what I've suggested to him is, is that he needs to consult with those who are around him in his Government. He needs to listen to what's being voiced by the Egyptian people and make a judgment about a pathway forward that is orderly, but that is meaningful and serious.

And I believe that—he's already said that he's not going to run for reelection. This is somebody who's been in power for a very long time in Egypt. Having made that psychological break, that decision that he will not be running again, I think the most important for him to ask himself, for the Egyptian Government to ask itself, as well as the opposition to ask itself, is how do we make that transition effective and lasting and legitimate.

And as I said before, that's not a decision ultimately the United States makes or any country outside of Egypt makes. What we can do, though, is affirm the core principles that are going to be involved in that transition. If you end up having just gestures towards the opposition, but it leads to a continuing suppression of the opposition, that's not going to work. If you have the pretense of reform, but not real reform, that's not going to be effective.

And as I said before, once the President himself announced that he was not going to be running again, and since his term is up rela-

tively shortly, the key question he should be asking himself is: How do I leave a legacy behind in which Egypt is able to get through this transformative period? And my hope is, is that he will end up making the right decision.

Prime Minister Harper. You asked me about the question of energy, and yes, we did discuss the matter you raised. And let me just say this in that context. I think it is clear to anyone who understands this issue that the need of the United States for fossil fuels far in excess of its ability to produce such energy will be the reality for some time to come. And the choice that the United States faces in all of these matters is whether to increase its capacity, to accept such energy from the most secure, most stable, and friendliest location it can possibly get that energy, which is Canada, or from other places that are not as secure, stable, or friendly to the interests and values of the United States.

President Obama. I think we've got a Canadian reporter.

Canada-U.S. Relations/Border Security/Egypt

Q. Prime Minister, can you answer this in English and French? Canadians will be asking how much of our sovereignty and our privacy rights will be given up to have more open borders and an integrated economy. And while I have you on your feet, I want to ask you about Egypt as well, whether you feel that Mr. Mubarak should be stepping down sooner, it would help the transition?

And, Mr. President, on the sovereignty issue, you're welcome to answer it—you don't have to speak in French, though. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Thank you. [*Laughter*] Now, I love French, but I'm just not very capable of speaking it. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Harper. On the question of sovereignty, this declaration is not about sovereignty. We are sovereign countries who have the capacity to act as we choose to act. The question that faces us is to make sure we act in a sovereign way that serves Canada's interests. It is in Canada's interests to work with our partners in the United States to ensure that our borders are secure and ensure that we can trade and travel across them as safely and as openly as possible within the context of our different laws.

And that is what we're trying to achieve here. We share security threats that are very similar on both sides of the border. We share an integrated economic space where it doesn't make sense to constantly check the same cargo over and over again. If we can do that at a perimeter, if we can decongest the border, that's what we should be doing. If we can harmonize regulations in ways that avoid unnecessary duplication and redtape for business, these are things that we need to do.

So that's what this is all about. This is about the safety of Canadians, and it is about creating jobs and economic growth for the Canadian economy.

Let me maybe—I'll do French, and then I'll come to Egypt.

[*Prime Minister Harper provided a French translation of his remarks. He then continued in English, as follows.*]

On the question of Egypt, let me just agree fully with what President Obama has said. I don't think there is any doubt from anyone who is watching the situation that transition is occurring and will occur in Egypt. The question is what kind of transition this will be and how it will lead. It is ultimately up to the Egyptian people to decide who will govern them.

What we want to be sure is that we lead towards a future that is not simply more democratic, but a future where that democracy is guided by such values as nonviolence, as the rule of law, as respect and respect for human rights, including the rights of minorities, including the rights of religious minorities.

[*Prime Minister Harper provided a French translation of his remarks.*]

President Obama. With respect to security issues and sovereignty issues, obviously, Canada and the United States are not going to match up perfectly on every measure with respect to how we balance security issues, privacy issues, openness issues. But we match up more than probably any country on Earth.

We have this border that benefits when it is open. The free flow of goods and services results in huge economic benefits for both sides. And so the goal here is to make sure that we are coordinating closely and that as we are taking steps and measures to ensure both openness and security, that we're doing so in ways that enhances the relationship as opposed to creates tensions in the relationship. And we are confident that we're going to be able to achieve that.

We've already made great progress just over the last several years on various specific issues. What we're trying to do now is to look at this in a more comprehensive fashion, so that it's not just border security issues, but it's a broader set of issues involved. And I have great confidence that Prime Minister Harper is going to be very protective of certain core values of Canada, just as I would be very protective of the core values of the United States, and those won't always match up perfectly.

And I thought—I agree even more with his answer in French. [*Laughter*]

All right. Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 3:21 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to his brother-in-law Konrad Ng.

Joint Declaration by President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada: Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness

February 4, 2011

The United States and Canada are staunch allies, vital economic partners, and steadfast friends. We share common values, deep links among our citizens, and deeply rooted ties. The extensive mobility of people, goods, capital, and information between our two countries has helped ensure that our societies remain open, democratic, and prosperous.

To preserve and extend the benefits our close relationship has helped bring to Americans and Canadians alike, we intend to pursue a perimeter approach to security, working together within, at, and away from the borders of our two countries to enhance our security and accelerate the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services between our two countries. We intend to do so in partnership, and in ways that support economic competitiveness, job creation, and prosperity.

We have advanced our prosperity through the *U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement* and the *North American Free Trade Agreement*. Over $250 billion of direct investment by each country in the other, and bilateral trade of more than half-a-trillion dollars a year in goods and services create and sustain millions of jobs in both our countries. At the U.S.-Canada border, nearly one million dollars in goods and services cross every minute, as well as 300,000 people every day, who cross for business, pleasure, or to maintain family ties.

The United States and Canada share a long history of cooperation in defending our values and freedoms. We stand together to confront threats to our collective security as partners in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. We work shoulder-to-shoulder in the defense of both our nations through the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

We share responsibility for the safety, security, and resilience of the United States and of Canada in an increasingly integrated and globalized world. We intend to address security threats at the earliest point possible in a manner that respects privacy, civil liberties, and human rights.

I. PRINCIPLES

We intend to work together in cooperation and partnership to develop, implement, manage, and monitor security initiatives, standards,

and practices to fulfill our vision. We recognize that our efforts should accelerate job creation and economic growth through trade facilitation at our borders and contribute directly to the economic security and well-being of both the United States and Canada.

We intend to strengthen our resilience—our ability to mitigate, respond to, and recover from disruptions. Success depends on readiness at all levels of our governments, within our communities, and among private sector owners and operators of our infrastructure, systems, and networks. We rely on secure communications and transportation networks, including our civil aviation system, and we intend to work together to make them resilient enough to continue operating in the face of a natural disaster or attack.

We expect to use a risk management approach where compatible, interoperable, and—where possible—joint measures and technology should proportionately and effectively address the threats we share. Effective risk management should enable us to accelerate legitimate flows of people and goods into the United States and Canada and across our common border, while enhancing the physical security and economic competitiveness of our countries.

We build on the efforts of many partners—from police and other emergency workers to our armed forces—who continue to safeguard us from the complex threats we face.

We also recognize that cooperation across air, land, and maritime domains, as well as in space and cyberspace, our enduring bi-national defense relationship, and military support for civilian authorities engaged in disaster response efforts and critical infrastructure protection, have all contributed significantly to the security of our populations.

We recognize that greater sharing of information will strengthen our ability to achieve the goals of this vision.

We intend to work together to engage with all levels of government and with communities, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, as well as with our citizens, on innovative approaches to security and competitiveness.

We value and respect our separate constitutional and legal frameworks that protect privacy, civil liberties, and human rights and provide for appropriate recourse and redress.

We recognize the sovereign right of each country to act independently in its own interest and in accordance with its laws.

We expect to work together with third countries and with international organizations, and intend to facilitate security sector reform and capacity building around the globe, to enhance standards that contribute to our overall security.

KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION

Addressing Threats Early

Collaborating to address threats before they reach our shores, we expect to develop a common understanding of the threat environment through improved intelligence and information sharing, as well as joint threat assessments to support informed risk management decisions.

We intend to develop an integrated strategy that would enable us to meet the threats and hazards that both our nations face, including natural disasters and man-made threats, including terrorism.

We expect to continue strengthening our health security partnership, through existing mechanisms for cooperation on health emergencies, and by further enhancing our collective preparedness and response capacity to a range of health security threats, including influenza pandemics.

We intend to work together to uncover and disrupt threats that endanger the security of both the United States and Canada and to establish those agreements or policies necessary to ensure timely sharing of information for combined efforts to counter the threats. We intend to ensure we have the ability to support one another as we prepare for, withstand, and rapidly recover from disruptions. We intend to make the *Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada on Emergency Management*

Cooperation, updated in 2008, a cornerstone of these efforts.

To increase security, counter fraud, and improve efficiency, we intend to work together to establish and verify the identities of travelers and conduct screening at the earliest possible opportunity. We intend to work toward common technical standards for the collection, transmission, and matching of biometrics that enable the sharing of information on travelers in real time. This collaboration should facilitate combined United States and Canadian screening efforts and strengthen methods of threat notification.

In order to promote mobility between our two countries, we expect to work towards an integrated United States-Canada entry-exit system, including work towards the exchange of relevant entry information in the land environment so that documented entry into one country serves to verify exit from the other country.

We intend to cooperate to identify, prevent, and counter violent extremism in our two countries. By working cooperatively on research, sharing best practices, and emphasizing community-based and community-driven efforts, we will have a better understanding of this threat and an increased ability to address it effectively.

We intend to formulate jointly United States-Canada privacy protection principles that should inform and guide our work in relation to facilities, operations, programs, and other initiatives contemplated by this *Declaration*.

We intend to work together to promote the principles of human rights, privacy, and civil liberties as essential to the rule of law and effective management of our perimeter.

Trade Facilitation, Economic Growth, and Jobs

We intend to pursue creative and effective solutions to manage the flow of traffic between the United States and Canada. We will focus investment in modern infrastructure and technology at our busiest land ports of entry, which are essential to our economic well-being.

We will strive to ensure that our border crossings have the capacity to support the volume of commercial and passenger traffic inherent to economic growth and job creation on both sides of the border.

To enhance our risk management practices, we intend to continue planning together, organizing bi-national port of entry committees to coordinate planning and funding, building, expanding or modernizing shared border management facilities and border infrastructure where appropriate, and using information technology solutions.

We intend to look for opportunities to integrate our efforts and where practicable, to work together to develop joint facilities and programs—within and beyond the United States and Canada—to increase efficiency and effectiveness for both security and trade.

We aim to build on the success of current joint programs by expanding trusted traveler and trader programs, harmonizing existing programs, and automating processes at the land border to increase efficiency.

We will look for ways to reduce the cost of conducting legitimate business across the border by implementing, where practicable, common practices and streamlined procedures for customs processing and regulatory compliance.

We intend to work towards developing an integrated cargo security strategy that ensures compatible screening methods for goods and cargo before they depart foreign ports bound for the United States or Canada, so that once they enter the territory of either we can, together, accelerate subsequent crossings at land ports of entry between our two countries.

We recognize the importance of the U.S.-*Canada Framework for the movement of Goods and People across the Border During and Following an Emergency*, agreed to in 2009. It underscores the importance of coordinated, cooperative, and timely border management decision making to mitigate the impacts of disruptions on our citizens and economies.

Integrated Cross-border Law Enforcement

We intend to build on existing bilateral law enforcement programs to develop the next

generation of integrated cross-border law enforcement operations that leverage cross-designated officers and resources to jointly identify, assess, and interdict persons and organizations involved in transnational crime.

We intend to seek further opportunities to pursue national security and transnational crime investigations together to maximize our ability to tackle the serious security threats that these organizations and individuals present.

We intend to improve the sharing among our law enforcement agencies of relevant information to better identify serious offenders and violent criminals on both sides of the border.

Critical Infrastructure and Cybersecurity

We intend to work together to prevent, respond to, and recover from physical and cyber disruptions of critical infrastructure and to implement a comprehensive cross-border approach to strengthen the resilience of our critical and cyber infrastructure with strong cross-border engagement.

The United States and Canada benefit from shared critical and cyber infrastructure. Our countries intend to strengthen cybersecurity to protect vital government and critical digital infrastructure of national importance, and to make cyberspace safer for all our citizens.

We intend to work together to defend and protect our use of air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace, and enhance the security of our integrated transportation and communications networks.

II. IMPLEMENTATION AND OVERSIGHT

The United States and Canada intend to establish a Beyond the Border Working Group (BBWG) composed of representatives from the appropriate departments and offices of our respective federal governments.

Responsibility for ensuring inter-agency coordination will rest with the President and the Prime Minister and their respective officials.

We intend for the BBWG to report to their respective Leaders in the coming months, and after a period of consultation, with a joint Plan of Action to realize the goals of this declaration, that would, where appropriate, rely upon existing bilateral border-related groups, for implementation.

The BBWG will report on the implementation of this declaration to Leaders on an annual basis. The mandate of the BBWG will be reviewed after three years.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint declaration.

The President's Weekly Address
February 5, 2011

This week, we received a report on jobs and unemployment that told us we're continuing to move in the right direction. But we need to get there faster. In the short term, the bipartisan tax cut we passed in December will give an added boost to job creation and economic growth. This is a tax cut that is already making Americans' paychecks a little bigger and giving businesses more incentive to invest and to hire.

But ultimately, our true measure of progress has to be whether every American who wants a job can find one, whether the jobs available pay well and offer good benefits, whether people in this country can still achieve the American Dream for themselves and for their children. That's the progress we're after.

To get there, we have to realize that in today's global, competitive economy, the best jobs and newest industries will take root in the countries with the most skilled workers, the strongest commitment to research and technology, and the fastest ways to move people, goods, and information. To win the future, America needs to outeducate, outinnovate, and outbuild the rest of the world.

On Thursday, I went to Penn State University, whose students and researchers are poised to lead the way on innovation and job creation.

They're taking up the challenge we've issued to scientists and engineers all across the country: If you assemble teams of the best minds in your field and focus on tackling the biggest obstacles to providing America with clean, affordable energy, we'll get behind your work. Your Government will support your research.

The folks in Pennsylvania have decided to focus on designing buildings that save more energy, everything from more efficient lighting and windows to heating and cooling. This won't just cut down on energy pollution; it can save us billions of dollars on our energy bills.

Most of all, discovering new ways to make buildings more energy efficient will lead to new jobs and new businesses. Over the last 2 years, we've seen a window manufacturer in Maryland boost business by 55 percent. A lighting company in North Carolina hired hundreds of workers. A manufacturer in Pennsylvania saw business increase by $1 million.

All we did for these companies was provide some tax credits and financing opportunities. And that's what we want to do going forward, so that it's profitable for American businesses to sell the discoveries made by the scientists at Penn State and other hubs of innovation. If businesses sell these discoveries—if they start making windows and insulation and buildings that save more energy—they will hire more workers. And that's how Americans will prosper. That's how we will win the future.

Our Government has an obligation to make sure that America is the best place on Earth to do business, that we have the best schools, the best incentives to innovate, and the best infrastructure. Next week, I'll see that kind of infrastructure when I visit Marquette, Michigan, a place where high-speed broadband is connecting a small town to the larger world.

Supporting businesses with this kind of 21st-century infrastructure and cutting-edge innovation is our responsibility. But businesses have a responsibility too. If we make America the best place to do business, businesses should make their mark here in America. They should set up shop here and hire our workers and pay decent wages and invest in the future of this Nation. That's their obligation. And that's the message I'll be bringing to American business leaders at the Chamber of Commerce on Monday, that government and businesses have mutual responsibilities, and that if we fulfill these obligations together, it benefits us all. Our workers will succeed, our Nation will prosper, and America will win the future in this century just like we did in the last.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:10 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on February 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 4, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 5.

Remarks to the United States Chamber of Commerce
February 7, 2011

Thank you very much. Please, have a seat. Thank you very much, Tom, for the gracious introduction. I want to make a few other acknowledgments. To Tom Bell, the chamber board president, thank you for helping to organize this. There are some members of my administration I want to make sure are introduced. My Chief of Staff, Bill Daley, is here. Senior Adviser Valerie Jarrett, who is interfacing with many of you and has gotten terrific advice from many of you, is here as well. Secretary Ray LaHood, our Transportation Secretary; Ambassador Ron Kirk, who is working hard to get trade deals around the world; our Small Business Administration Administrator, Karen Mills; my Director of the National Economic Council, Gene Sperling, is here. And I also want to make mention, Fred Hochberg, our Export-Import Bank Chairman; Elizabeth Littlefield, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation President. And I also want to acknowledge a good friend, Paul Volcker, the outgoing Chair of the President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board. Thank you all for being here.

Now, Tom, it is good to be here today at the Chamber of Commerce. I'm here in the interest of being more neighborly. [*Laughter*] I strolled over from across the street, and look, maybe if we had brought over a fruitcake when I first moved in, we would have gotten off to a better start. [*Laughter*] But I'm going to make up for it.

The truth is, this isn't the first time I've been to the chamber or the first time that we've exchanged ideas. Over the last 2 years, I've sought advice from many of you as we were grappling with the worst recession most of us have ever known. It's a recession that led to some very difficult decisions. For many of you, that meant restructuring and branch closings and layoffs that I know were very painful to make. For my administration, it meant a series of emergency measures that I would not have undertaken under normal circumstances, but that were necessary to stop our economy from falling off a cliff.

Now, on some issues, like the Recovery Act, we've found common cause. On other issues, we've had some pretty strong disagreements. But I'm here today because I am convinced, as Tom mentioned in his introduction, that we can and we must work together. Whatever differences we may have, I know that all of us share a deep, abiding belief in this country, a belief in our people, a belief in the principles that have made America's economy the envy of the world.

America's success didn't happen overnight, and it didn't happen by accident. It happened because the freedom that has allowed good ideas to flourish, that has allowed capitalism to thrive; it happened because of the conviction that in this country, hard work should be rewarded and that opportunity should be there for anybody who's willing to reach for it. And because it happened at every juncture in our history—not just once, not just twice, but over and over again, we came together to remake ourselves, we came together as one Nation and did what was necessary to win the future—that is why I am so confident that we will win the future again.

That's the challenge that we face today. We still have, by far, the world's largest and most vibrant economy. We have the most productive workers, the finest universities, and the freest markets. The men and women in this room are living testimony that American industry is still the source of the most dynamic companies and the most ingenious entrepreneurs.

But we also know that with the march of technology over the last few decades, the competition for jobs and businesses has grown fierce. The globalization of our economy means that businesses can now open up a shop, employ workers, and produce their goods wherever an Internet connection exists. Tasks that were once done by a thousand workers can now be done by a hundred or in some cases even 10. And the truth is, as countries like China and India and Brazil grow and develop larger middle classes, it's profitable for global companies to aggressively pursue these markets and, at times, to set up facilities in these countries.

These forces are as unstoppable as they are powerful. But combined with a brutal and devastating recession, these forces have also shaken the faith of the American people in the institutions of business and government. They see a widening chasm of wealth and opportunity in this country, and they wonder if the American Dream is slipping away.

They wonder if the middle class, rather than expanding as it has through our lifetimes, is in the midst of an inexorable contraction. And we can't ignore these concerns. We have to renew people's faith in the promise of this country, that this is a place where you can make it if you try. And we have to do this together: business and Government, workers and CEOs, Democrats and Republicans.

We know what it will take for America to win the future. We need to outinnovate, we need to outeducate, we need to outbuild our competitors. We need an economy that's based not on what we consume and borrow from other nations, but what we make and what we sell around the world. We need to make America the best place on Earth to do business.

And this is a job for all of us. As a government, we will help lay the foundation for you to grow and innovate and succeed. We will upgrade our transportation and communication networks so you can move goods and information more quickly and more cheaply. We'll invest in education so that you can hire the most skilled, talented workers in the world. And we'll work to knock down barriers that make it harder for you to compete, from the Tax Code to the regulatory system.

But I want to be clear: Even as we make America the best place on Earth to do business, businesses also have a responsibility to America.

I understand the challenges you face. I understand you are under incredible pressure to cut costs and keep your margins up. I understand the significance of your obligations to your shareholders and the pressures that are created by quarterly reports. I get it.

But as we work with you to make America a better place to do business, I'm hoping that all of you are thinking what you can do for America. Ask yourselves what you can do to hire more American workers, what you can do to support the American economy and invest in this Nation. That's what I want to talk about today: the responsibilities we all have—the mutual responsibilities we have—to secure the future that we all share.

Now, as a country, we have a responsibility to encourage American innovation. I talked about this quite a bit at my State of the Union.

Companies like yours have always driven the discovery of new products and new ideas. You do it better than anybody. But what you also know is that it's not always profitable to—in the short term, at least—for you to invest in basic research. It's very expensive, and the payoffs are not always clear, and they're not always localized. And that's why Government has traditionally helped invest in this kind of science, planting the seeds that ultimately grew into technologies from the computer chips to the Internet.

That's why we're making investments today in the next generation of big ideas: in biotechnology, in information technology, and in clean energy technology. We're reforming our patent system so innovations can move more quickly to market. Steve Case is heading up a new partnership called Startup America to help entrepreneurs turn new ideas into new businesses and new jobs. And I've also proposed a bigger, permanent tax credit for all the research and development your companies do in this country. I believe that is a priority.

We also have a responsibility as a nation to provide our people with—and our businesses—with the fastest, most reliable way to move goods and information. The cost to business from outdated and inadequate infrastructure is enormous, and that's what we have right now: outdated, inadequate infrastructure.

And any of you that have been traveling to other countries, you know it, you see it, and it affects your bottom lines. That's why I want to put more people to work rebuilding crumbling roads, rebuilding our bridges. That's why I've proposed connecting 80 percent of the country with high-speed—to high-speed rail and making it possible for companies to put high-speed Internet coverage in the reach of virtually all Americans.

You understand the importance of this. The fact is, the Chamber of Commerce and the AFL–CIO don't agree on a whole lot. Tom Donohue and Richard Trumka are not Facebook friends. [*Laughter*] Well, maybe—I don't think you are, anyway. [*Laughter*] I didn't check on this, but—[*laughter*]. But they agree on the need to build a 21st-century infrastructure. And I want to thank the chamber for pushing Congress to make more infrastructure investments and to do so in the most cost-effective way possible: with tax dollars that leverage private capital and with projects that are determined not by politics, but by what's best for our economy.

Third responsibility that we have as a nation is to invest in the skills and education of our young people. If we expect companies to do business and hire in America, America needs a pool of trained, talented workers that can outcompete anybody in the world. And that's why we're reforming K-through-12 education. That's why we're training a hundred thousand

new math and science teachers. That's why we're making college more affordable and revitalizing our community college system.

Recently, I visited GE in Schenectady, which has partnered with a local community college. And while students train for jobs available at the nearby GE plant, they earn a paycheck, and they've got their tuition covered. And as a result, young people can find work, GE can fill high-skill positions, and the entire region has become more attractive to businesses. It's a win-win for everybody, and it's something we're trying to duplicate across the country.

Now, to make room for these investments in education, in innovation, in infrastructure, Government also has a responsibility to cut spending that we just can't afford. That's why I've promised to veto any bill that's larded up with earmarks. That's why I've proposed that we freeze annual domestic spending for the next 5 years. Understand what this means. This would reduce the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade and bring this spending—domestic discretionary spending—down to the lowest share of our economy since Eisenhower was President. That was a long time ago.

Now, it's not going to be enough. We're going to have to do more. Because the driving force on our deficits are entitlements spending, and that's going to require both parties to work together, because those are some tough problems that we're going to have to solve. And I am eager to work with both parties and with the chamber to take additional steps across the budget to put our Nation on a sounder fiscal footing.

By stopping spending on things we don't need, we can make investments in the things that we do need, the same way families do. If they've got a fiscal problem, if they've got to tighten their belt, they don't stop paying for Johnny to go to college. They cut out things they don't need, but they still make investments in the things that are going to make sure we win the future. And that's what we have to do as a country: make some smart choices—tough choices, but smart ones.

Now, in addition to making Government more affordable, we're also making it more effective and more consumer friendly. We're trying to run the Government a little bit more like you run your business, with better technology and faster services. So in the coming months, my administration will develop a proposal to merge, consolidate, and reorganize the Federal Government in a way that best serves the goal of a more competitive America. And we want to start with the 12 different agencies that deal with America's exports. If we hope to help our businesses sell more goods around the world, we should ensure we're all pulling in the same direction. And frankly, with 12 different agencies in charge, nobody's in charge. So we're going to fix that as an example of how we can make a government that's more responsive to the American people and to American businesses.

Which brings me to the final responsibility of Government: breaking down some of the barriers that stand in the way of your success. As far as exports are concerned, that means seeking new opportunities and opening new markets for your goods. And I will tell you, I will go anywhere anytime to be a booster for American businesses, American workers, and American products. We recently signed—[*applause*]—and I don't charge a commission. [*Laughter*]

We recently signed export deals with India and China that will support more than 250,000 jobs here in the United States. We finalized a trade agreement with South Korea that will support at least 70,000 American jobs. And by the way, it's a deal that has unprecedented support from business and labor, Democrats and Republicans. And that's the kind of deal that I will be looking for as we pursue trade agreements with Panama and Colombia, as we work to bring Russia into the international trading system. Those are going to be our top priorities, because we believe Americans have the best products and the best businesses, and if we're out there selling and we're out there hustling, there's no reason why we can't do a lot better than we're doing right now when it comes to our exports.

Now, another barrier Government can remove—and I hear a lot about this from many of you—is a burdensome corporate Tax Code with one of the highest rates in the world. You know how it goes: Because of various loopholes and carve-outs that have built up over the years, some industries pay an average rate that is four or five times higher than others. Companies are taxed heavily for making investments with equity, yet the Tax Code actually pays companies to invest using leverage. As a result, you've got too many companies ending up making decisions based on what their tax director says instead of what their engineer designs or what their factories produce. And that puts our entire economy at a disadvantage. We need something smarter, something simpler, something fairer. That's why I want to lower the corporate rate and eliminate these loopholes to pay for it, so that it doesn't add a dime to our deficit. And I'm asking for your help in this fight. I think it can be done.

Which brings me to the last barriers we're trying to remove, and those are outdated and unnecessary regulations. I've ordered a Governmentwide review, and if there are rules on the books that are needlessly stifling job creation and economic growth, we will fix them.

Already we're dramatically cutting down on the paperwork that saddles businesses with huge administrative costs. We're improving the way FDA evaluates things like medical devices, to get innovative and lifesaving treatments to market faster. And the EPA, based on the need for further scientific analysis, delayed the greenhouse gas permitting rules for biomass.

I've also ordered agencies to find ways to make regulations more flexible for small businesses. And we've turned a tangle of fuel economy regulations and pending lawsuits into a single standard that will reduce our dependence on foreign oil, save consumers money at the pump, and give car companies the certainty that they need, all negotiated by the various stakeholders without the need for congressional legislation.

But ultimately, winning the future is not just about what the Government can do for you to succeed. It's also about what you can do to help America succeed.

So we were just talking about regulations. Even as we eliminate burdensome regulations, America's businesses have a responsibility as well to recognize that there are some basic safeguards, some basic standards that are necessary to protect the American people from harm or exploitation. Not every regulation is bad. Not every regulation is burdensome on business. A lot of the regulations that are out there are things that all of us welcome in our lives.

Few of us would want to live in a society without rules that keep our air and water clean, that give consumers the confidence to do everything from investing in financial markets to buying groceries. And the fact is, when standards like these have been proposed in the past, opponents have often warned that they would be an assault on business and free enterprise. We can look at the history in this country. Early drug companies argued the bill creating the FDA would "practically destroy the sale of . . . remedies in the United States." That didn't happen. Auto executives predicted that having to install seatbelts would bring the downfall of their industry. It didn't happen. The president of the American Bar Association denounced child labor laws as "a communistic effort to nationalize children." That's a quote.

None of these things came to pass. In fact, companies adapt and standards often spark competition and innovation. I was traveling when I went up to Penn State to look at some clean energy hubs that have been set up. I was with Steve Chu, my Secretary of Energy. And he won a Nobel Prize in physics, so when you're in conversations with him, you catch about one out of every four things he says. [*Laughter*]

But he started talking about energy efficiency and about refrigerators, and he pointed out that the Government set modest targets a couple decades ago to start increasing efficiency over time. They were well thought through; they weren't radical. Companies competed to hit these markers. And they hit them every time, and then exceeded them. And as a result,

a typical fridge now costs half as much and uses a quarter of the energy that it once did, and you don't have to defrost, chipping at that stuff—[*laughter*]—and then putting the warm water inside the freezer and all that stuff. It saves families and businesses billions of dollars.

So regulations didn't destroy the industry; it enhanced it, and it made our lives better—if they're smart, if they're well designed. And that's our goal, is to work with you to think through how do we design necessary regulations in a smart way and get rid of regulations that have outlived their usefulness or don't work.

I also have to point out, the perils of too much regulation are also matched by the dangers of too little. And we saw that in the financial crisis, where the absence of sound rules of the road, that wasn't good for business. Even if you weren't in the financial sector, it wasn't good for business. And that's why, with the help of Paul Volcker, who is here today, we passed a set of commonsense reforms.

The same can be said of health insurance reform. We simply could not continue to accept a status quo that's made our entire economy less competitive, as we've paid more per person for health care than any other nation on Earth. Nobody is even close. And we couldn't accept a broken system where insurance companies could drop people because they got sick or families went into bankruptcy because of medical bills.

I know that folks here have concerns about this law. And I understand it. If you're running a business right now and you're seeing these escalating health care costs, your instinct is, if I've got even more laws on top of me, that's going to increase my costs even more. I understand that suspicion, that skepticism.

But the nonpartisan congressional watchdogs at the CBO estimate that health care tax credits will be worth nearly $40 billion for small businesses over the next decade—$40 billion, directly to small businesses who are doing the right thing by their employees.

And experts—not just from the Government, but also those commissioned by the Business Roundtable—suggest that health insurance reform could ultimately save large employers anywhere from $2,000 to $3,000 per family—your employees and your bottom line.

I've said in the State of the Union and I'll repeat here today: I am willing and happy to look at other ideas to improve the law, including incentives to improve patient safety and medical malpractice reforms. And I want to correct a flaw that's already placed an unnecessary bookkeeping burden on too many small businesses, and I appreciate the chamber's help in doing that.

But we have to recognize that some commonsense regulations often will make sense for your businesses, as well as your families, as well as your neighbors, as well as your coworkers. Of course, your responsibility goes beyond recognizing the need for certain standards and safeguards. If we're fighting to reform the Tax Code and increase exports to help you compete, the benefits can't just translate into greater profits and bonuses for those at the top. They have to be shared by American workers, who need to know that expanding trade and opening markets will lift their standards of living as well as your bottom line.

We can't go back to the kind of economy and culture that we saw in the years leading up to the recession, where growth and gains in productivity just didn't translate into rising incomes and opportunity for the middle class. That's not something, necessarily, we can legislate, but it's something that all of us have to take responsibility for thinking about. How do we make sure that everybody's got a stake in trade, everybody's got a stake in increasing exports, everybody's got a stake in rising productivity because ordinary folks end up seeing their standards of living rise as well. That's always been the American promise. That's what JFK meant when he said, "A rising tide lifts all boats." Too many boats have been left behind, stuck in the mud.

And if we as a nation are going to invest in innovation, that innovation should lead to new jobs and manufacturing on our shores. The end result of tax breaks and investments can't simply be that new breakthroughs and technologies are discovered here in America, but then

the manufacturing takes place overseas. That, too, breaks the social compact. It makes people feel as if the game is fixed and they're not benefiting from the extraordinary discoveries that take place here.

So the key to our success has never been just developing new ideas; it's also been making new products. So Intel pioneers the microchip, and then puts thousands to work building them in Silicon Valley. Henry Ford perfects the assembly line, and then puts a generation to work in the factories of Detroit. That's how we built the largest middle class in the world. Those folks working in those plants, they go out and they buy a Ford, they buy a personal computer, and the economy grows for everyone. And that's how we'll create the base of knowledge and skills that propel the next inventions and the next ideas.

Right now businesses across this country are proving that America can compete. Caterpillar is opening a new plant to build excavators in Texas that used to be shipped from Japan. In Tennessee, Whirlpool is opening their first new U.S. factory in more than a decade. Dow is building a new plant in Michigan to manufacture batteries for electric vehicles. A company called Geomagic, a software maker, decided to close down its overseas centers in China and Europe and move their R&D here to the United States. These companies are bringing jobs back to our shores. And that's good for everybody.

So if I've got one message, my message is, now is the time to invest in America. Now's the time to invest in America. Today, American companies have nearly $2 trillion sitting on their balance sheets. And I know that many of you have told me that you're waiting for demand to rise before you get off the sidelines and expand, and that with millions of Americans out of work, demand's risen more slowly than any of us would like.

We're in this together. But many of your own economists and salespeople are now forecasting a healthy increase in demand. So I just want to encourage you to get in the game. As part of the bipartisan tax deal we negotiated, with the support of the chamber, businesses can immediately expense a hundred percent of their capital investments. And as all of you know, it's investments made now that will pay off as the economy rebounds. And as you hire, you know that more Americans working will mean more sales for your companies. It will mean more demand for your products and services. It will mean higher profits for your companies. We can create a virtuous circle.

And if there's a reason you don't share my confidence, if there's a reason that you don't believe that this is the time to get off the sidelines, to hire and to invest, I want to know about it. I want to fix it. That's why I've asked Jeff Immelt of GE to lead a new council of business leaders and outside experts so that we're getting the best advice on what you're facing out there. And we'll be holding our first meeting 2 weeks from now, on the 24th, so you can get your e-mails in early with your ideas, with your thoughts about how we keep moving forward to create this virtuous cycle.

Together, I am confident we can win the competition for new jobs and industries. And I know you share my enthusiasm. Here's one thing I know: For all the disagreements, Tom, that we may have sometimes on issues, I know you love this country. I know you want America to succeed just as badly as I do.

So yes, we'll have some disagreements, and yes, we'll see things differently at times. But we're all Americans. And that spirit of patriotism and that sense of mutual regard and common obligation, that has carried us through far harder times than the ones we've just been through.

And I'm reminded, toward the end of the 1930s, amidst the Depression, the looming prospect of war, FDR—President Roosevelt—realized he would need to form a new partnership with business if we were going to become what he would later call the "arsenal of democracy." And as you can imagine, the relationship between the President and business leaders during the course of the Depression had been rocky at times. They'd grown somewhat fractured by the New Deal.

So Roosevelt reached out to businesses, and business leaders answered the call to serve

their country. After years of working at cross purposes, the result was one of the most productive collaborations between the public and private sectors in American history.

Some, like the head of GM, hadn't previously known the President and, if anything, had seen him as an adversary. But he gathered his family, and he explained that he was going to head up what would become the War Production Board. And he said to his family, "This country has been good to me, and I want to pay it back." I want to pay it back.

And in the years that followed, automobile factories converted to making planes and tanks. And corset factories made grenade belts. A toy company made compasses. A pinball machine maker turned out shells. Nineteen forty-one would see the greatest expansion of manufacturing in the history of America. And not only did this help us win the war, it led to millions of new jobs and helped produce the great American middle class.

So we have faced hard times before. We have faced moments of tumult and moments of change. And we know what to do. We know how to succeed. We are Americans, and as we have done throughout our history, I have every confidence that once again we will rise to this occasion, that we can come together, we can adapt, and we can thrive in this changing economy. And we need to look no further than the innovative companies in this room. If we can harness your potential and the potential of your people across this country, I think there's no stopping us.

So thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. at U.S. Chamber of Commerce Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas J. Donahue, president and chief executive officer, and Thomas D. Bell, Jr., chairman of the board of directors, U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Stephen M. Case, chairman, Startup America Partnership; Richard L. Trumka, president, AFL–CIO; and Jeffrey R. Immelt, chairman and chief executive officer, General Electric Co., in his capacity as Chair of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness.

Statement on the Southern Sudan Independence Referendum
February 7, 2011

On behalf of the people of the United States, I congratulate the people of Southern Sudan for a successful and inspiring referendum in which an overwhelming majority of voters chose independence. I am therefore pleased to announce the intention of the United States to formally recognize Southern Sudan as a sovereign, independent state in July 2011.

After decades of conflict, the images of millions of Southern Sudanese voters deciding their own future was an inspiration to the world and another step forward in Africa's long journey toward justice and democracy. Now all parties have a responsibility to ensure that this historic moment of promise becomes a moment of lasting progress. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement must be fully implemented, and outstanding disputes must be resolved peacefully. At the same time, there must be an end to attacks on civilians in Darfur and a definitive end to that conflict.

As I pledged in September when addressing Sudanese leaders, the United States will continue to support the aspirations of all Sudanese—north and south, east and west. We will work with the governments of Sudan and Southern Sudan to ensure a smooth and peaceful transition to independence. For those who meet all of their obligations, there is a path to greater prosperity and normal relations with the United States, including examining Sudan's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism. And while the road ahead will be difficult, those who seek a future of dignity and peace can be assured that they will have a steady partner and friend in the United States.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Digital Computer Exports
February 7, 2011

Dear _____:

In accordance with the provisions of section 1211(d) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (Public Law 105–85), I hereby notify you of my decision to establish a new level for the notification procedure for digital computers set forth in section 1211(a) of Public Law 105–85. The new level will be 1.5 Weighted TeraFLOPS. In accordance with the provisions of section 1211(e), I hereby notify you of my decision to remove Albania and Croatia from the list of countries covered under section 1211(b). The attached report provides the rationale supporting these decisions and fulfills the requirements of Public Law 105–85, sections 1211(d) and (e).

I have made these changes based on the recommendation of the Departments of State, Defense, Commerce, and Energy.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Carl M. Levin, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Timothy P. Johnson, chairman, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Statement on the Resignation of Representative Jane L. Harman
February 8, 2011

Through nearly two decades in Congress, Jane Harman has been a champion of our national security, from standing up for our brave men and women in uniform to reforming our intelligence community after the 9/11 attacks. Michelle and I congratulate her on taking the next step in her career at Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, where she will continue to advance the policies we'll need to keep America strong and prosperous. We will miss her passionate voice in Congress, and we join the people of California in thanking her for her many years of service.

Statement on Senator James H. Webb's Decision Not To Seek Reelection
February 9, 2011

From his courageous service in Vietnam to his tireless work in the United States Senate, Jim Webb has dedicated his life to serving our Nation and those who defend it. Jim has been a relentless advocate for our veterans who helped to pass the post-9/11 GI bill, a strong voice for American leadership in the world who strengthened our relationships in Southeast Asia, and a leading reformer who is improving our criminal justice system. Michelle and I thank Senator Webb for his distinguished service, and I look forward to working with Jim over the next 2 years on behalf of Virginians and the American people.

Remarks at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan
February 10, 2011

Have a seat, have a seat. It is wonderful to be here in the Upper Peninsula with so many Yoopers. How many of you are Green Bay fans too? Yes, I've been seeing too many Green Bay fans lately. [*Laughter*]

It is great to be here. It is great to be at Northern Michigan University. We've got some wonderful guests here that I just want to mention. First of all, somebody who is as good a public servant, not just good at what he does, but good at heart and works tirelessly on behalf of the entire State, your senior Senator, Carl Levin, is here. Now, his partner in the Senate could not be here because she's actually leading a Democratic Caucus retreat, but she's been fighting for manufacturing, for broadband, for a lot of things that we're talking about here today. So I just want to acknowledge Debbie Stabenow, who deeply cares about the work that you do up here.

I want to thank the great hospitality of Mayor John Kivela, who has been showing me around town. Thank you so much, Mayor Kivela. The president of Northern Michigan University, Dr. Les Wong, is here. And all of you are here. [*Laughter*] And you guys are pretty special. Absolutely.

Before I begin, I just want to say that we are following today's events in Egypt very closely. And we'll have more to say as this plays out. But what is absolutely clear is that we are witnessing history unfold. It's a moment of transformation that's taking place because the people of Egypt are calling for change. And they've turned out in extraordinary numbers representing all ages and all walks of life, but it's young people who've been at the forefront—a new generation, your generation—who want their voices to be heard. And so going forward, we want those young people and we want all Egyptians to know America will continue to do everything that we can to support an orderly and genuine transition to democracy in Egypt.

Now, as we watch what's taking place, we're also reminded that we live in an interconnected world. What happens across the globe has an impact on each and every one of us. And that's why I've come to Marquette today, not only because it's beautiful and the people are really nice—which is true—but I've come here because in the 21st century, it's not just the big cities where change is happening, it's also in towns like this where the jobs and businesses of tomorrow will take root and where young and talented Americans can lead. It's towns like this where our economic future will be won.

Now, in the short term, the best thing we can do to speed up economic growth is to make sure families and businesses have more money to spend, and that's exactly what—[*applause*]. Got a little applause there. [*Laughter*] That's exactly why we passed those tax cuts in December. That's what it's doing. Because Democrats and Republicans came together, Americans' paychecks will be a little bigger this year and businesses will be able to write off their investments and companies will grow and they'll add workers. But we've got more to do.

Our measure of success has to be whether every American who wants a job can find a job; whether this country is still the place where you can make it if you try. In a world that's more connected and more competitive, other nations look at this moment as their moment, their turn to win the jobs and industries of our time. I see things differently. I see this as America's moment to win the future, so that the 21st century is the American century just like the 20th century was. Yes, we can.

But to do this, we're going to have to up our game, Marquette. We've got to up our game. To attract the best jobs, the newest industries, we're going to have to outinnovate, outeducate, outbuild. We're going to have to outhustle the rest of the world. That means investing in cutting-edge research and technology, like the new advanced battery manufacturing industry that's taking root right here in the State of Michigan. It means investing in the skills and training of our people, just like it's taking

place at this university. It means investing in transportation and communications networks that move goods and information as fast as possible.

And to make room for these investments, we're going to have to cut whatever spending we can do without. We've got a real issue with debts and deficit, and so we've got to live within our means. And that means that we've got to cut out things that aren't adding to growth and opportunity in order to invest in those things that are.

And that's why I've proposed that we freeze annual domestic spending for the next 5 years. That will reduce the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade. It will bring spending to the lowest share of our economy since Eisenhower was President. That's a long time ago. Even I wasn't born then. [*Laughter*]

So Government has to do what American families do every day: live within our means. But even as we do so, we can't sacrifice our future. I'll just give you guys an analogy. If you're trying to cut back in your family, you might decide, we're not going to go out to dinner so often; maybe we'll skip the vacation; we're not going to remodel the kitchen. But you wouldn't stop saving for your child's college education. You wouldn't stop saving for your own retirement. If your boiler was broken or your roof had a leak, you'd still go ahead and make those investments.

Well, the same is true with our country. We've got to cut out the equivalents of eating out and vacations. I know there may be some restaurant owners here—go eat at their restaurants—[*laughter*]—but I'm just making a general point. Even as we cut out the things we can afford to do without, we got a responsibility to invest in those areas that will have the biggest impact on our future, and those things are innovation, education, and infrastructure.

And that last area—infrastructure—is why I've come here today. Connecting a country of our size has never been easy. Just imagine what Americans experienced when they fanned out from 13 Colonies to settle a continent. If you wanted to get from one coast to the other, it would take you months; it would cost you a small fortune. If you settled in the heartland, you were an island, with no real market to sell your goods or buy what you needed. You might have to wait until the traders came by before you stocked up.

So we decided to build a railroad to span a continent, one that would blast through mountains of granite and use thousands of miles of steel and put to work an army of citizens and immigrants to work. It was an endeavor that would also require support of our Government. It didn't just happen on its own. As General William T. Sherman said, "Uncle Sam is the only giant I know who can grapple the subject."

So even as President Lincoln tried to hold the North and South together, he was determined to see this railroad unite East and West. And private companies joined the charge, racing one another to meet in the middle. And eventually, a telephone operator—a telegraph operator sent out a simple message to the cheers of a waiting nation. The telegraph just said: "Done." Done. Now, if he knew that we were still talking about it today, he might have come up with something more inspiring. [*Laughter*]

But overnight, the transcontinental railroad laid the way for a nationwide economy, not a bunch of local economies, but a nationwide economy. Suddenly, a cross-country trip was cut from months to days. The cost to move goods and mail plummeted. Cowboys drove cattle to railcars that whisked them back east. Entrepreneurs could sell anything, anywhere.

After the railroad was completed, a newspaper proclaimed: "We are the youngest of peoples. But we are teaching the world to march forward." Teaching the world to march forward.

That's who we are. We are a nation that has always been built to compete. And that's why, decades later, FDR set up the Rural Electrification Administration to help bring power to vast swaths of America that were still in darkness. Companies said that building lines to rural areas would be too costly. I mean, big cities already had electricity. But they said: "It's too

costly to go out into remote areas. It's too costly to come up into the Upper Peninsula."

So Americans in these towns went without refrigeration or running water. If you wanted a glimpse of the larger world, your town might run a movie off a small diesel engine. It might not even last the full film.

Once power lines were laid down, electricity flowed to farms across the country, transforming millions of lives. There's a well-known story of a Texas family returning home the first night their farmhouse was hooked up, and a woman thought it was on fire. And her daughter said, "No, Mama, the lights are on." Think about that. That wasn't that long ago. And Government was there to help make sure that everybody—everybody, not just some, but everybody, not just those who folks could make an immediate profit off of, but everybody—had access to electricity.

So years later, as our Nation grew by leaps and bounds, we realized that a patchwork system of back roads and dirt paths couldn't handle the biggest economy in the world. So President Eisenhower helped make it possible to build an Interstate Highway System, and that, too, transformed the Nation as much as the railways had.

And finally, we could ship goods and services to places that the railroads didn't reach. It meant that we could live apart from where we worked. We could travel. We could see America.

Each of these achievements, none of them just happened. We chose to do them. We chose to do big things. And every American benefited—not just from new conveniences, not just from the jobs created by laying down new lines or tracks or pavement. We benefited enormously from new economic growth, from the scores of businesses that opened near each town's new train station or new power line or new off-ramp.

So this is a new century, and we can't expect tomorrow's economy to take root using yesterday's infrastructure. We got to think about what's the next thing, what's the next big thing, and make sure that we're at the forefront, just like we were in the last century.

Today, new companies are going to seek out the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information, whether they are in Shanghai or in Chicago. So if we want new jobs and businesses here in America, we've got to have the best transportation system and the best communication network in the world. It's like that movie, "Field of Dreams"—if we build it, they will come. [*Laughter*] But we've got to build it. We've got to build it.

Over the last 2 years, we've begun rebuilding for the 21st century. This is a national project that has meant thousands of jobs for the hard-hit construction industry. And I've now proposed redoubling these efforts. We want to put more Americans to work repairing crumbling bridges and roads. Within 25 years, our goal is to have 80 percent of Americans with access to high-speed rail, which could allow you to go to places in half the time it takes by car. Within 5 years, we want to make it possible for businesses to put high-speed wireless services in reach of virtually every American.

And that last part, high-speed wireless, is why I chose to come to Northern Michigan University today.

Now let me give you some context. Today, more than 90 percent of homes in South Korea subscribe to high-speed broadband. They just have better networks than we do. In America, the Nation that created the Internet—by the way, because of Government investment; it didn't just happen by itself magically—because of Government R&D, we created the Internet, but yet only 65 percent of households here in America can say the same. When it comes to high-speed Internet, the lights are still off in one-third of our households. One out of every three households in America don't have that same access. For millions of Americans, the railway hasn't showed up yet.

For our families and our businesses, high-speed wireless service, that's the next train station; it's the next off-ramp. It's how we'll spark new innovation, new investment, new jobs.

And you know this here in Northern Michigan. That's why I showed up, in addition to it being pretty and people being nice. [*Laughter*] For decades now, this university has given a

new laptop to every incoming student. Wi-Fi stretched across campus. But if you lived off-campus, like most students and teachers here, you were largely out of luck. Broadband was often too expensive to afford. And if you lived a bit further out of town, you were completely out of luck, because broadband providers, they often won't build networks where it's not profitable, just like they wouldn't build electrical lines where it wasn't profitable.

So this university tried something new. You partnered with various companies to build a high-speed, next-generation wireless network. And you managed to install it with six people in only 4 days without raising tuition. Good job. Good job, Mr. President. By the way, if you give me the name of these six people—[*laughter*]—there's a whole bunch of stuff in Washington I'd like to see done in 4 days with six people. [*Laughter*]

So today, this is one of America's most connected universities, and enrollment is near the highest it's been in 30 years.

And what's more—and this is what makes this special—you told nearby towns that if they allowed you to retrofit their towers with new equipment to expand your network, then their schools, their first-responders, their city governments could use it too. And as a result, police officers can access crime databases in their cars and firefighters can download blueprints on the way to a burning building and public works officials can save money by monitoring pumps and equipment remotely.

And you've created new online learning opportunities for K–12 students as far as 30 miles away, some of whom can't always make it to school in a place that averages 200 inches of snow a year. [*Laughter*] Now, some of these students don't appreciate the end of school [snow]* days. I know Malia and Sasha get really excited about school [snow]* days. Of course, in Washington, things shut down when there's an inch of snow. [*Laughter*] But this technology is giving them more opportunity. It's good for their education, it's good for our economy. In fact, I just came from a demonstration of online learning in action. We were with Professor Lubig, and he had plugged in Negaunee High School and Powell Township School in Big Bay. So I felt like the guy in Star Trek. I was being beamed around—[*laughter*]—across the Upper Peninsula here. But it was remarkable to see the possibilities for these young people who are able to, let's say, do a chemistry experiment, and they can compare the results with kids in Boston.

Or if there's some learning tool or material they don't have immediately accessible in their school, they can connect here to the university, and they're able to tap into it.

It's opening up an entire world to them. And one of the young people who I was talking to, he talked about foreign policy and what we were seeing in places like Egypt. And he said, "What's amazing, especially for us, is that now we have a window to the entire world, and we can start understanding other cultures and other places in ways that we could never do without this technology."

For local businesses, broadband access is helping them grow and prosper and compete in a global economy. In fact, Marquette has been rated one of the top five "eCities" in Michigan for entrepreneurship. [*Applause*] That's right.

So here's a great example, Getz's Clothiers. The Getzes are here. Where are the Getzes? They're around here somewhere. There they are right there.

This is a third-generation, family-owned Marquette institution. They've occupied the same downtown store for more than a century, but with the help of broadband, they were recently listed as one of America's 5,000 fastest growing companies. Now how did they pull that off?

Obviously, they've got great products, great service. But what's also true is online sales now make up more than two-thirds of their annual revenue. Think about that. You got a downtown department store; now two-thirds of its sales are online. It can process more than 1,000 orders a day, and its workforce has more than

* White House correction.

doubled. So you've got a local business with a global footprint because of technology.

Now, if you can do this in snowy U.P.—[*laughter*]—we can do it all across America. In fact, many places already are. So in Wagner, South Dakota, patients can receive high-quality, lifesaving medical care from a Sioux Falls specialist who can monitor their EKG and listen to their breathing from 100 miles away. In Ten Sleep, Wyoming—I love the name of that town, Ten Sleep; it's a town in Wyoming of 300 people—a fiber optic network allowed a company to employ several hundred teachers who teach English to students in Asia over the Internet, 24 hours a day. You've all heard about outsourcing. Well, this is "insourcing," where overseas work is done right here in the United States of America.

So we want to multiply these stories—we want to multiply your story—all over the country. We want to invest in the next generation of high-speed wireless coverage for 98 percent of Americans.

This isn't just about faster Internet or being able to find a friend on Facebook, it's about connecting every corner of America to the digital age. It's about a rural community in Iowa or Alabama where farmers can monitor weather across the State and market across the globe. It's about an entrepreneur on Main Street with a great idea she hopes to sell to the big city. It's about every young person who no longer has to leave his hometown to seek new opportunity, because opportunity is right there at his or her fingertips.

So to make this happen, we're going to invest in research and development of emerging technologies and applications. We're going to accelerate breakthroughs in health and education and transportation, and deploy a new nationwide, interoperable wireless network for first-responders, making sure they've got the funding and the frequencies that they were promised and that they need to keep us safe. It's important. By selling private companies the rights to these airwaves, we won't just encourage private investment and expand wireless access, we're actually going to bring in revenues that lower our deficits.

Now, access to high-speed Internet by itself won't make a business more successful or a student smarter or a citizen more informed. That takes hard work. It takes those late nights. It takes hustle. It takes that quintessentially American drive to be the best. That's what's the most important ingredient for our success.

But we've always believed that we have a responsibility to guarantee all our people every tool necessary for them to meet their full potential. So if they're willing to work hard, they can succeed. And in a 21st-century economy, that has never been more important. Every American deserves access to the world's information. Every American deserves access to the global economy. We have promised this for 15 years. It's time we delivered on that promise. It's time we delivered on that promise.

So connecting our people, competing with the rest of the world, living within our means without sacrificing what's required to win the future, we can do all this because we've done it before.

In 1960, at the height of his Presidential campaign, JFK came to Michigan. And it was a moment similar to this one. Other nations were doing their best to try to take our place at the top. And here in Michigan, he made it clear that if we wanted to keep from being knocked off our perch, there could only be one goal for the United States. It could be summed up in one word: "first." First.

"I do not mean first, but," he said. "I don't mean first, when. I don't mean first, if. I mean first, period." "And the real question now," he continued—[*applause*]—"the real question," he continued, "is whether we're up to the task, whether each and every one of us is willing to face the facts, to bear the burdens, to provide the risks, and to meet our dangers."

That was 50 years ago. But things haven't changed in terms of what's required to succeed.

And we were up to the task then. I believe we're up to the task today. Time and again, whether westward or skyward, with each rail and road that we've laid, in every community, we've connected with our own science and our imagination, and we forged anew our faith that

we can do anything. We do big things. That's who we are. And that's who we're going to have to be again: a young nation that teaches the world to march forward.

That's what you're doing up here in U.P. That's what you're doing here at Northern Michigan University. That's what we're all going to do together in the months and years to come.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:36 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Carol and Rocky Getz, owners, Getz's Clothiers.

Statement on the Situation in Egypt
February 10, 2011

The Egyptian people have been told that there was a transition of authority, but it is not yet clear that this transition is immediate, meaningful, or sufficient. Too many Egyptians remain unconvinced that the Government is serious about a genuine transition to democracy, and it is the responsibility of the Government to speak clearly to the Egyptian people and the world. The Egyptian Government must put forward a credible, concrete, and unequivocal path toward genuine democracy, and they have not yet seized that opportunity.

As we have said from the beginning of this unrest, the future of Egypt will be determined by the Egyptian people. But the United States has also been clear that we stand for a set of core principles. We believe that the universal rights of the Egyptian people must be respected and their aspirations must be met. We believe that this transition must immediately demonstrate irreversible political change and a negotiated path to democracy. To that end, we believe that the emergency law should be lifted. We believe that meaningful negotiations with the broad opposition and Egyptian civil society should address the key questions confronting Egypt's future: protecting the fundamental rights of all citizens, revising the Constitution and other laws to demonstrate irreversible change, and jointly developing a clear roadmap to elections that are free and fair.

We therefore urge the Egyptian Government to move swiftly to explain the changes that have been made and to spell out in clear and unambiguous language the step-by-step process that will lead to democracy and the representative Government that the Egyptian people seek. Going forward, it will be essential that the universal rights of the Egyptian people be respected. There must be restraint by all parties. Violence must be forsaken. It is imperative that the Government not respond to the aspirations of their people with repression or brutality. The voices of the Egyptian people must be heard.

The Egyptian people have made it clear that there is no going back to the way things were. Egypt has changed, and its future is in the hands of the people. Those who have exercised their right to peaceful assembly represent the greatness of the Egyptian people and are broadly representative of Egyptian society. We have seen young and old, rich and poor, Muslim and Christian join together and earn the respect of the world through their nonviolent calls for change. In that effort, young people have been at the forefront, and a new generation has emerged. They have made it clear that Egypt must reflect their hopes, fulfill their highest aspirations, and tap their boundless potential. In these difficult times, I know that the Egyptian people will persevere, and they must know that they will continue to have a friend in the United States of America.

Remarks on the Situation in Egypt
February 11, 2011

Good afternoon, everybody. There are very few moments in our lives where we have the privilege to witness history taking place. This is one of those moments. This is one of those times. The people of Egypt have spoken, their voices have been heard, and Egypt will never be the same.

By stepping down, President Mubarak responded to the Egyptian people's hunger for change. But this is not the end of Egypt's transition, it's a beginning. I'm sure there will be difficult days ahead, and many questions remain unanswered. But I am confident that the people of Egypt can find the answers and do so peacefully, constructively, and in the spirit of unity that has defined these last few weeks. For Egyptians have made it clear that nothing less than genuine democracy will carry the day.

The military has served patriotically and responsibly as a caretaker to the state and will now have to ensure a transition that is credible in the eyes of the Egyptian people. That means protecting the rights of Egypt's citizens, lifting the emergency law, revising the Constitution and other laws to make this change irreversible, and laying out a clear path to elections that are fair and free. Above all, this transition must bring all of Egypt's voices to the table. For the spirit of peaceful protest and perseverance that the Egyptian people have shown can serve as a powerful wind at the back of this change.

The United States will continue to be a friend and partner to Egypt. We stand ready to provide whatever assistance is necessary—and asked for—to pursue a credible transition to a democracy. I'm also confident that the same ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit that the young people of Egypt have shown in recent days can be harnessed to create new opportunity: jobs and businesses that allow the extraordinary potential of this generation to take flight. And I know that a democratic Egypt can advance its role of responsible leadership not only in the region, but around the world.

Egypt has played a pivotal role in human history for over 6,000 years. But over the last few weeks, the wheel of history turned at a blinding pace as the Egyptian people demanded their universal rights.

We saw mothers and fathers carrying their children on their shoulders to show them what true freedom might look like. We saw a young Egyptian say: "For the first time in my life, I really count. My voice is heard. Even though I'm only one person, this is the way real democracy works." We saw protesters chant, "*Salmiya! Salmiya!*"—"We are peaceful!"—again and again. We saw a military that would not fire bullets at the people they were sworn to protect. We saw doctors and nurses rushing into the streets to care for those who were wounded, volunteers checking protesters to ensure that they were unarmed.

We saw people of faith praying together and chanting, "Muslims, Christians, we are one!" And though we know that the strains between faiths still divide too many in this world and no single event will close that chasm immediately, these scenes remind us that we need not be defined by our differences, we can be defined by the common humanity that we share.

And above all, we saw a new generation emerge, a generation that uses their own creativity and talent and technology to call for a government that represented their hopes and not their fears, a government that is responsive to their boundless aspirations. One Egyptian put it simply: "Most people have discovered in the last few days . . . that they are worth something, and this cannot be taken away from them anymore, ever."

This is the power of human dignity, and it can never be denied. Egyptians have inspired us, and they've done so by putting the lie to the idea that justice is best gained through violence. For in Egypt, it was the moral force of nonviolence—not terrorism, not mindless killing, but nonviolence, moral force—that bent the arc of history toward justice once more.

And while the sights and sounds that we heard were entirely Egyptian, we can't help but hear the echoes of history, echoes from Germans tearing down a wall, Indonesian students taking to the streets, Gandhi leading his people down the path of justice.

As Martin Luther King said in celebrating the birth of a new nation in Ghana while trying to perfect his own, "There's something in the soul that cries out for freedom." Those were the cries that came from Tahrir Square, and the entire world has taken note.

Today belongs to the people of Egypt, and the American people are moved by these scenes in Cairo and across Egypt because of who we are as a people and the kind of world that we want our children to grow up in.

The word *tahrir* means "liberation." It is a word that speaks to that something in our souls that cries out for freedom. And forevermore, it will remind us of the Egyptian people, of what they did, of the things that they stood for, and how they changed their country and, in doing so, changed the world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:06 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; and Egyptian citizens Marwa Massoud of Alexandria and Yousry Nasrallah of Cairo.

Remarks Prior to White House Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs's Final Briefing

February 11, 2011

Press Secretary Gibbs. You should brief today. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. We got a one and one. [*Laughter*]

The President. All right. Well, listen, obviously, Gibbs's departure is not the biggest one today. [*Laughter*] Having said that, I thought I should come into the briefing room just to say a few words about my departing Press Secretary.

As some of you know, Robert started very early with me on this wild ride that I've been on. I had run for the United States Senate. I was not expected to win. When I won the Democratic primary in Illinois, I realized that I was going to have to start staffing up a little bit; at the time, I only had, I think, six, seven people working for me. And I still didn't have a lot of money, so all I could afford was Gibbs. [*Laughter*]

And so Robert came to work with me, and we had what appeared to be a pretty significant general election, and then Alan Keyes came in and so that ended up not being our primary focus. We then had this incredible opportunity to speak at the national convention in Boston. And I know that a lot of you think that probably most attention was devoted to the speech that I delivered, the keynote speech in Boston, but in fact actually the most challenging problem was what tie to wear.

And this went up to the very last minute. I mean, 10 minutes before we were about to go on stage, we were still having an argument about ties. I had bought five, six ties. And Michelle didn't like any of them. Axelrod didn't like a couple of them—him being, you know, one of the best dressed men in the world. [*Laughter*] So we really valued his opinion. [*Laughter*]

And then somebody—I don't remember who it was—turned and said, you know what, what about Gibbs's tie? What about Gibbs's tie? That might look good. And frankly, Robert didn't want to give it up because he thought he looked really good in the tie, but eventually he was willing to take one for the Gipper. And so he took off his tie, and I put it on. And that's the tie that I wore at the national convention.

He has not said about—anything about this tie all these years. But I have to tell you that I know there's a simmering resentment—[*laughter*]—that he never got it back. And so as a consequence, I wanted here today—I wanted this

on the record, on camera—[*laughter*]—that I am finally returning Robert's tie. And if he chooses to break the glass, he can. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, the President presented Press Secretary Gibbs with the necktie mounted in a frame.*]

But this is going to be a reminder to me that Robert has not only been an extraordinary Press Secretary, but he has been a great friend. And you could not ask for somebody better in the foxhole with you during all the twists and turns of my candidacy and then the incredible challenges that we faced over the last 2 years.

So I'm so proud of him, and everybody here loves Robert. He's going to be working closely with us. I don't think we could have a better Press Secretary. I think Jay is going to do an outstanding job of filling Robert's shoes. But I certainly couldn't have a better friend at the podium each and every day. So just wanted to say congratulations, Robert.

Q. Did you sign?

The President. Well, I didn't actually——

Q. What's it say?

The President. I didn't actually sign the tie, because, as I said, he may decide he wants to wear it. It just said I thought that I should finally give you your tie back. It and you helped me get started. All right. Thank you, brother.

Press Secretary Gibbs. Thank you.

The President. You notice, by the way, that he bought one just like it. [*Laughter*]

Press Secretary Gibbs. I like that tie.

Q. Can we ask you about Egypt?

Q. Anything further about Egypt?

Press Secretary Gibbs. I like that tie. Let me get a few things—let me just say a few things before we get down to talking about what we have every day and what we should every day, and that's the business of the country.

I—it is a tremendous honor and privilege to do this each and every day, to serve and to take part in days like today that are so momentous. And I want to thank the President and all of his team for, again, the privilege to serve.

I don't want to spend a lot of time doing this. I don't talk about myself well. But I would be remiss if I didn't talk about a group of people that, I want to be clear, doesn't work for me, but I have the great privilege and I'm lucky enough to work with. I would not want to do this job, as amazing and as exciting as it is, without them. And I wouldn't have made it through it without them.

I don't intend, today or tomorrow, to tell any of you goodbye, because I don't intend to go anywhere. You all are forever a part of this experience for me. You've become a greater extension of my family. We've shared a lot of extraordinary times.

I will miss boring days like today at the White House. [*Laughter*] I should tell you that for all of you that are looking for help on your morning shows, that Jay likes calls around 4:15 in the morning. [*Laughter*] If you don't get through at first, just keep dialing. [*Laughter*]

And again, it has been an extraordinary privilege. And I will have more to say to all these guys and more to say to those of you that are in the back of the room that have meant so much to me and continue to mean so much to me.

But before I lose it, we should probably start the 250th briefing of the Obama administration with Mr. Feller [Ben Feller, Associated Press].

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; former White House Senior Adviser David M. Axelrod; and incoming White House Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the full press briefing.

The President's Weekly Address
February 12, 2011

A few months ago, I received a letter from a woman named Brenda Breece. I want to share her story because it speaks to what a lot of families are going through, and it offers a good example of the kind of responsibility that's needed in Washington right now.

Brenda's a mom and a special-ed teacher from Missouri. Her husband David was employed at the local Chrysler plant for nearly four decades. They've worked hard their whole lives. But like a lot of folks, they've taken some hits over the past few years. When the Chrysler plant closed, David had to take early retirement. His pension helps, but it's half of what he earned before. Meanwhile, because of budget cuts, Brenda has had to buy school supplies for her students out of her own pocket, because it's her job and she cares about those kids.

Money has been tight, but they are doing the best they can. And like so many families, they are sacrificing what they don't need so they can afford what really matters. This is what Brenda told me. "I feel my family is frugal," she said. "We go to the movies once a month, but usually, we just wait for them to come out on TV. I watch the food budget. We combine trips into town, and use coupons, and we trim each other's hair when we need a haircut."

So Brenda and her husband know what they can do without. But they also know what investments are too important to sacrifice. Their daughter Rachel is a sophomore in college with a 4.0 grade point average. The tuition's a big expense. But it's worth it, because it will give her the chance to achieve her dreams. In fact, Brenda is looking for a second job to ensure, as she put it, "the money is there to help Rachel with her future."

Families across this country understand what it takes to manage a budget. They understand what it takes to make ends meet without forgoing important investments like education. Well, it's time Washington acted as responsibly as our families do. And on Monday, I'm proposing a new budget that will help us live within our means while investing in our future.

My budget freezes annual domestic spending for the next 5 years—even on programs I care deeply about—which will reduce the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade. This freeze will bring this type of spending to its lowest level as a share of the economy since Dwight Eisenhower was President. We've stripped down the budget by getting rid of waste. For example, we're getting rid of thousands of Government-owned buildings that sit empty because they aren't needed. I've also proposed freezing salaries for hard-working Government employees, because everyone has to do their part. And I'm going to make sure politics doesn't add to our deficit by vetoing any bill that contains earmarks.

And yet just as the Breece family is making difficult sacrifices while still investing in the future—by helping, for instance, their daughter pay her tuition—my budget does the same. I'm proposing that we invest in what will do the most to grow the economy in the years to come. This means job-creating investments in roads, high-speed rail, and broadband. This means cutting-edge research that holds the promise of creating countless jobs and whole new industries, like clean energy and biotechnology. And it means improving our schools and making college more affordable to give every young person the chance to fulfill his or her potential and receive the job training they need to succeed, because it would be a mistake to balance the budget by sacrificing our children's education.

So after a decade of rising deficits, this budget asks Washington to live within its means, while at the same time investing in our future. It cuts what we can't afford to pay for what we cannot do without. That's what families do in hard times. And that's what our country has to do as well.

Thanks so much.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4 p.m. in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on February 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 11, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 12.

Statement on the Sixth Anniversary of the Death of Former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri of Lebanon
February 13, 2011

On this sixth anniversary of the murder of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and 22 other innocent victims, the United States reaffirms our strong support for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and its mission to find the truth behind that outrageous act of terrorism. Ending the era of impunity for political assassinations is essential to realizing the justice and stability that the Lebanese people deserve, and any attempt to interfere with the Tribunal's work or fuel tensions within Lebanon must not be tolerated.

The cause for which Prime Minister Hariri and so many Lebanese patriots gave their lives must remain our guide. To this end, the United States will never waver in our support for the sovereignty, integrity, and independence of Lebanon, and we remain committed to the full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1559, 1680, and 1701. At this critical moment, we call on all friends of Lebanon to stand with the people of Lebanon, who must be free to determine their own destiny. And those Lebanese who forge their future in a spirit of peace and reconciliation will continue to have a strong partner in the United States.

Remarks at Parkville Middle School and Center of Technology in Baltimore, Maryland
February 14, 2011

Well, good morning, everybody. I am here at Parkville Middle School and Center of Technology outside of Baltimore with Secretary Arne Duncan and Budget Director Jack Lew. And I just came to Parkville on a day where we are unveiling our budget, and I'm doing so for a reason. But before I do that, I just want to thank Principal Buddy Parker, who is showing us around, as well as Susan Yoder, the eighth grade science teacher who we just visited with in her classroom.

Over the last few weeks, I've traveled the country talking about what we need to do to win the future. I've talked about the need to invest in innovation so that the next big idea is discovered here in the United States of America. I've talked about the need to invest in high-speed rail and high-speed Internet so that companies can move goods and information faster than ever. And this week, I'll be talking about the need to invest in education—in places like Parkville—so that every American is equipped to compete with any worker, anywhere in the world.

Now, these investments are an essential part of the budget my administration is sending to Congress, because I'm convinced that if we outbuild and outinnovate and outeducate as well as outhustle the rest of the world, the jobs and industries of our time will take root here in the United States. Our people will prosper, and our country will succeed.

But I'm also convinced that the only way we can make these investments in our future is if our Government starts living within its means, if we start taking responsibility for our deficits. And that's why when I was sworn in as President, I pledged to cut the deficit in half by the end of my first term. The budget I'm proposing today meets that pledge and puts us on a path to pay for what we spend by the middle of the decade. We do this in part by eliminating

waste and cutting whatever spending we can do without.

As I start—as a start, I've called for a freeze on annual domestic spending over the next 5 years. This freeze would cut the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade, bringing this kind of spending—domestic discretionary spending—to its lowest share of our economy since Dwight Eisenhower was President. Let me repeat that: Because of our budget, this share of spending will be at its lowest level since Dwight Eisenhower was President. That level of spending is lower than it was under the last three administrations, and it will be lower than it was under Ronald Reagan.

Now, some of the savings will come through less waste and more efficiency. To take just one example, by getting rid of 14,000 office buildings, lots, and Government-owned properties we no longer need, we can save taxpayers billions of dollars. And when it comes to programs we do need, we're making them work better by demanding accountability. Instead of spending first and asking questions later, we're rewarding folks inside and outside Government who deliver results. And to make sure that special interests aren't larding up legislation with pet projects, I've pledged to veto any bill that contains earmarks.

Still, even as we cut waste and inefficiency, this budget freeze will require some tough choices. It will mean cutting things that I care deeply about, for example, community action programs in low-income neighborhoods and towns and community development block grants that so many of our cities and States rely on. But if we're going to walk the walk when it comes to fiscal discipline, these kinds of cuts will be necessary.

I'm also looking forward to working with members of both parties to take steps beyond this budget freeze, because cutting annual domestic spending won't be enough to meet our long-term fiscal challenges. As the bipartisan fiscal commission concluded, the only way to truly tackle our deficit is to cut excessive spending wherever we find it: in domestic spending, defense spending, health care spending, and spending through tax breaks and loopholes. So what we've done here is make a downpayment, but there's going to be more work that needs to be done, and it's going to require Democrats and Republicans coming together to make it happen.

We've begun to do some of this with $78 billion in cuts in the Defense Department's budget plan, by ending tax breaks for oil and gas companies, and through billions of dollars in savings from wasteful health spending, savings we'll use to make sure doctors don't see their reimbursements slashed and that they stay in the system seeing patients.

But here's the thing. While it's absolutely essential to live within our means, while we are absolutely committed to working with Democrats and Republicans to find further savings and to look at the whole range of budget issues, we can't sacrifice our future in the process. Even as we cut out things that we can afford to do without, we have a responsibility to invest in those areas that will have the biggest impact in our future. And that's especially true when it comes to education.

Right now this school, Parkville, is preparing our kids for the jobs and careers of the 21st century. It's a school that nurtures what students are passionate about and prepares them for success. Students in the magnet program here start out by taking courses in each of four subjects, from applied engineering to environmental science, gradually focusing their studies on one subject over the next couple of years.

I'm told the most popular subject at this school is engineering. And that's important because today the most common educational background for America's top business leaders isn't economics. It's not finance. It's not even business. It's engineering.

Engineering and math, critical thinking, problem-solving, these are the kinds of subjects and skills that our kids need to achieve success in the 21st century. That's why we're spearheading a drive to prepare more than 10,000 new math and science teachers over the next 5 years and train a hundred thousand more current teachers in those fields. That's why we're pushing forward on a Race to the Top in our schools that has led over 40 States

to raise their standards for teaching and learning for less than 1 percent of what we spend on education each year. That's why we're protecting the more than $800 increase that we added to the most widely used Federal scholarships and making the tough choices to put them on a firm footing for years to come. And that's why we're on track to meet the goal that I set when I took office: By 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.

I know the American people understand why this is so important. And I think that those of us who are working in Washington need to understand why these investments in the future are so important as well.

I mentioned in my weekly radio address a letter that I recently got from a woman named Brenda Breece. Brenda's a mom. She's a special-ed teacher in Missouri, and her husband David lost his job when the local Chrysler plant shut down. So money has been tight for the family, and they've had to sacrifice the little things that they can do without. The one thing that Brenda knows she can't afford to sacrifice is her daughter Rachel's education. And that's why she's looking, as we speak, for a second job to help put Rachel through college and ensure, as she told me, that "the money is there to help Rachel with her future."

What's true for Brenda's family is true for the larger American family: Education is an investment that we need to win the future, just like innovation is an investment that we need to win the future, just like infrastructure is an investment that we need to win the future. And to make sure that we can afford these investments, we're going to have to get serious about cutting back on those things that would be nice to have, but we can do without.

That's what families across the country do every day: They live within their means, and they invest in their families' futures. And it's time we did the same thing as a country. That's how we're going to get our fiscal house in order, that's how we'll grow our economy and attract new jobs to our shores, and that's how we will win the future in the 21st century.

So thanks very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With Students at Parkville Middle School and Center of Technology in Baltimore
February 14, 2011

The President. Hello, hello—there we go. Parkville Middle School, can you hear me now?

Students. Yes!

The President. Well, it is wonderful to see all of you. And I want to thank your terrific principal, all the great staff who helped to arrange this visit.

First of all, Malia and Sasha say hi.

Students. Hi!

The President. Michelle says hi.

Students. Hi!

The President. Happy Valentine's Day. Have you guys been exchanging valentines?

Students. Yes——

The President. Yes? A little bit, huh?

In addition to coming here to wish you happy Valentine's Day, the other reason I'm here is because what you guys are doing here at Parker—at Parkville—the principal is Parker—what we're—what you guys are doing here at Parkville is so important to our future.

We live in a world that is getting smaller because of technology. You saw recently what was happening in Egypt. People with Facebook and Twitter led an entire revolution in their country. And we were watching it live on television. Twenty years ago, 30 years ago, that would have been impossible.

So the world is getting smaller, and what it means is, is that there are terrific opportunities for us to partner with people around the world, but it also means that the world is more

competitive, because when you graduate from high school and when you graduate from college, you're going to be competing with people all around the world to make the best products and the best services. And so for us to be successful as a country, you're going to have to succeed. And for you to succeed, you're going to have to be able to possess the skills and knowledge of a 21st-century economy.

And that means math, and that means science. And so we wanted to come here to highlight the great work that you guys are doing in math and science and engineering, because we want the kind of success that we're seeing at this school spread all across the country. And that requires we make investments in great teachers and good equipment and labs and the Internet. And it means that we've got to make sure that we're emphasizing every day how important education is and we're putting our money behind it.

So right now I'm in the process of putting together a big Federal budget. And some of you may know that we've got a big deficit because we just came out of a big recession, and so people are worried about how we're going to be able to pay for things in the future. And the message that I delivered today was, just like in your own households, if things get a little tight, you may stop going out to dinner or stop going to the movies, but you're still going to make sure that you're paying for the things that are really important, like heat or fixing the roof, or your parents are setting money aside for your college education. We've got to do that same thing as a country.

And so I wanted to make sure that we came to your school today to highlight it and also applaud you for your success. So I'm just hoping that everybody here knows we're proud of you; that you guys are working hard; that you stay focused because your success ultimately is going to mean America's success.

All right? Now, I think I'll take time—I'm not supposed to do this, but I think I'll take time for, like, two questions. So anybody have any questions? All right, this young man right here. He had his hand up right away.

Life as President

Q. What does it feel like to be President?

The President. What does it feel like to be the President? You know, some days you're burdened by some really tough decisions. Some of you may have family members who are in Afghanistan, for example. And I'm the Commander in Chief, and so I'm responsible for sending those young men and women over, who are doing an amazing job. Some of them get hurt; some of them get killed. And so you feel a responsibility that is profound about making that decision. Even though you think it's the best thing to do for the country, it's one that carries an unbelievable cost.

There are days where you feel really excited because something that you got done you know is helping somebody. So when we passed the health care bill that we passed—and it was controversial. It was a lot of work. It was—and some people still don't like it. But I would get letters from people who said, "My kid couldn't get insurance before, and now I feel secure because they're able to get health insurance so that when they get sick, they're able to get health care." So that makes you feel good.

Every day I feel proud and privileged to have the chance to work in this office. But I'll be honest with you. There are certain parts of the job that are kind of tough, like I'm kind of in this bubble. I can't go anywhere, I can't just—if I want to just go to the corner drugstore and buy some shaving cream or something—[*laughter*]—or if I just feel like taking a walk with Bo—like, I can't do anything spontaneous, and that kind of gets on your nerves.

And the other thing is people know who you are everywhere, obviously. [*Laughter*] So you have to—you always have to, like, shave and comb your hair and—[*laughter*]—you can't just roll out of bed and be out there. [*Laughter*] So that kind of stuff can be a little tough.

Young lady right here.

Managing Stress/President's Advice for Future Success

Q. Is there a lot of stress in——

The President. Stand up, I'm sorry. What's your name?

Q. Brianna.

The President. Brianna. So what were you saying?

Q. Is there, like, a lot of stress when you——

The President. Like when I'm working on the economy or something?

Q. ——when you're working on the economy——

The President. Well, yes, look, there's stress involved. But let me tell you something. I promise you there's stress involved being the principal of a middle school. There's stress involved being a teacher.

One of the things that I want everybody here to understand is, is that whatever profession you choose, whether it's being President, being an engineer, being the principal of a school, being a teacher, there are going to be some stresses involved. There aren't that many jobs out there that you just kind of sit back and have fun all the time. But that's part of growing up, and that's part of being successful, is managing that stress.

The one thing that I think helps me handle the stress is if I feel like, at the end of the day, I've done the best possible job I can do, even if not everything has worked out exactly the way I planned it, then I feel okay. What bothers me is if I feel like, gosh, I could have done better on that.

So you guys should take the same attitude with respect to school. I mean, look, I know seventh and eighth graders, you guys have got your own little stresses. And growing up is stressful, and taking tests are stressful, and getting that paper in on time is stressful. The key is just making sure that you're hungry for knowledge, you're working hard, you're getting better all the time. If you do that, then you can look yourself in the mirror and say, I'm doing my best.

And if everybody here is doing their best, I'm confident you guys are going to succeed and thrive.

All right? Well, I'm very proud of you guys. Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:38 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Murray G. "Buddy" Parker III, principal, Parkville Middle School and Center of Technology.

The President's News Conference
February 15, 2011

The President. Good morning, everybody. Please have a seat. I figured that I'd give Jay one more taste of freedom—[*laughter*]—before we lock him in a room with all of you, so I'm here to do a little downfield blocking for him. Before I take a few questions, let me say a few words about the budget we put out yesterday.

Now, just like every family in America, the Federal Government has to do two things at once. It has to live within its means while still investing in the future. If you're a family trying to cut back, you might skip going out to dinner, you might put off a vacation. But you wouldn't want to sacrifice saving for your kids' college education or making key repairs in your house. So you cut back on what you can't afford, to focus on what you can't do without.

And that's what we've done with this year's budget. When I took office, I pledged to cut the deficit in half by the end of my first term. Our budget meets that pledge and puts us on a path to pay for what we spend by the middle of the decade.

As a start, it freezes domestic discretionary spending over the next 5 years, which would cut the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade and bring annual domestic spending to its lowest share of the economy since Dwight Eisenhower.

Now, some of the savings will come through less waste and more efficiency. To take just one example, we'll give—we'll save billions of

dollars by getting rid of 14,000 office buildings, lots, and Government-owned properties that we no longer need. And to make sure special interests are not larding up legislation with special projects, I've pledged to veto any bills that contain earmarks.

Still, even as we cut waste and inefficiency, this budget freeze will also require us to make some tough choices. It will mean freezing the salaries of hard-working Federal employees for the next 2 years. It will mean cutting things I care about deeply, like community action programs for low-income communities. And we have some conservation programs that are going to be scaled back. These are all programs that I wouldn't be cutting if we were in a better fiscal situation. But we're not.

We also know that cutting annual domestic spending alone won't be enough to meet our long-term fiscal challenges. That's what the bipartisan fiscal commission concluded; that's what I've concluded. And that's why I'm eager to tackle excessive spending wherever we find it, in domestic spending, but also in defense spending, health care spending, and spending that is embedded in the Tax Code.

Now, some of this spending we've begun to tackle in this budget, like the $78 billion that Secretary Gates identified in defense cuts. But to get where we need to go, we're going to have to do more. We'll have to bring down health care costs further, including in programs like Medicare and Medicaid, which are the single biggest contributor to our long-term deficits. I believe we should strengthen Social Security for future generations, and I think we can do that without slashing benefits or putting current retirees at risk. And I'm willing to work with everybody on Capitol Hill to simplify the individual Tax Code for all Americans.

All of these steps are going to be difficult. And that's why all of them will require Democrats, Independents, and Republicans to work together. I recognize that there are going to be plenty of arguments in the months to come, and everybody is going to have to give a little bit. But when it comes to difficult choices about our budget and our priorities, we have found common ground before. Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill came together to save Social Security. Bill Clinton and the Republican Congress eventually found a way to settle their differences and balance the budget. And many Democrats and Republicans in Congress today came together in December to pass a tax cut that has made Americans' paychecks a little bigger this year and will spur on additional economic growth this year.

So I believe we can find this common ground, but we're going to have to work. And we owe the American people a Government that lives within its means while still investing in our future, in areas like education, innovation, and infrastructure that will help us attract new jobs and businesses to our shores. That's the principle that should drive this debate in the coming months. I believe that's how America will win the future in the coming years.

So with that, let me take a few questions. And I'm going to start off with Ben Feller of AP.

2012 Federal Budget/Entitlement Spending/Situation in the Middle East

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. You've been talking a lot about the need for tough choices in your budget, but your plan does not address the long-term crushing costs of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the real drivers of long-term debt. Can you explain that? Where is your leadership on that issue, and when are we going to see your plan?

And if I may, sir, on the foreign front, the uprising in Egypt has helped prompt protests in Bahrain, in Yemen, and Iran. I'm wondering how you balance your push for freedoms in those places against the instability that could really endanger U.S. interests.

The President. On the budget, what my budget does is to put forward some tough choices, some significant spending cuts, so that by the middle of this decade our annual spending will match our annual revenues. We will not be adding more to the national debt. It's—so to use a—sort of an analogy that families are familiar with, we're not going to be running up the credit card any more. That's important, and that's hard to do. But it's necessary to do.

And I think that the American people understand that.

At the same time, we're going to be making some key investments in places like education and science and technology, research and development that the American people understand is required to win the future. So what we've done is we've taken a scalpel to the discretionary budget, rather than a machete.

Now, I said in the State of the Union, and I'll repeat, that side of the ledger only accounts for about 12 percent of our budget. So we've got a whole bunch of other stuff that we're going to have to do, including dealing with entitlements.

Now, you talked about Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. The truth is, Social Security is not the huge contributor to the deficit that the other two entitlements are. I'm confident we can get Social Security done in the same way that Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill were able to get it done, by parties coming together, making some modest adjustments. I think we can avoid slashing benefits, and I think we can make it stable and stronger for not only this generation, but for the next generation.

Medicare and Medicaid are huge problems because health care costs are rising even as the population is getting older. And so what I've said is that I'm prepared to work with Democrats and Republicans to start dealing with that in a serious way. We made a downpayment on that with health care reform last year. That's part of what health care reform was about. The projected deficits are going to be about $250 billion lower over the next 10 years than they otherwise would have been because of health care reform, and they'll be a trillion dollars lower than they otherwise would have been if we hadn't done health care reform for the following decade.

But we're still going to have to do more. So what I've said is that if you look at the history of how these deals get done, typically it's not because there's an Obama plan out there, it's because Democrats and Republicans are both committed to tackling this issue in a serious way.

And so what we've done is, we've been very specific in terms of how to stabilize the discretionary budget, how to make sure that we're not adding additional debt by 2015. And then let's together, Democrats and Republicans, tackle these long-term problems in a way that I think will ensure our fiscal health and, at the same time, ensure that we're making investments in the future.

Q. But when is that happening?

The President. Well, we're going to be in discussions over the next several months. I mean, this is going to be a negotiation process. And the key thing that, I think, the American people want to see is that all sides are serious about it and all sides are willing to give a little bit and that there's a genuine spirit of compromise as opposed to people being interested in scoring political points.

Now, we did that in December during the lame duck on the tax cut issue. Both sides had to give. And there were folks in my party who were not happy, and there were folks in the Republican Party who were not happy. And my suspicion is, is that we're going to be able to do the same thing if we have that same attitude with respect to entitlements.

But the thing I want to emphasize is, nobody is more mindful than me that entitlements are going to be a key part of this issue, as is tax reform. I want to simplify rates. And I want to, at the same time, make sure that we have the same amount of money coming in as going out.

Those are big, tough negotiations, and I suspect that there's going to be a lot of ups and downs in the months to come before we finally get to that solution. But just as a lot of people were skeptical about us being able to deal with the tax cuts that we did in December, but we ended up getting it done, I'm confident that we can get this done as well.

Now, with respect to the situation in the Middle East, obviously, there's still a lot of work to be done in Egypt itself, but what we've seen so far is positive. The military council that is in charge has reaffirmed its treaties with countries like Israel and international treaties. It has met with the opposition, and the opposition has felt that it is serious about moving

towards fair and free elections. Egypt is going to require help in building democratic institutions and also in strengthening an economy that's taken a hit as a consequence of what happened. But so far at least, we're seeing the right signals coming out of Egypt.

There are ramifications, though, throughout the region. And I think my administration's approach is the approach that jibes with how most Americans think about this region, which is that each country is different, each country has its own traditions. America can't dictate how they run their societies, but there are certain universal principles that we adhere to. One of them is, we don't believe in violence as a way of—and coercion—as a way of maintaining control. And so we think it's very important that in all the protests that we're seeing in—throughout the region that governments respond to peaceful protesters peacefully.

The second principle that we believe in strongly is in the right to express your opinions, the freedom of speech and freedom of assembly that allows people to share their grievances with the government and to express themselves in ways that, hopefully, will over time meet their needs.

And so we have sent a strong message to our allies in the region saying, let's look at Egypt's example as opposed to Iran's example. I find it ironic that you've got the Iranian regime pretending to celebrate what happened in Egypt when, in fact, they have acted in direct contrast to what happened in Egypt by gunning down and beating people who were trying to express themselves peacefully in Iran.

And I also think that an important lesson—and I mentioned this last week—that we can draw from this is real change in these societies is not going to happen because of terrorism; it's not going to happen because you go around killing innocents; it's going to happen because people come together and apply moral force to a situation. That's what garners international support. That's what garners internal support. That's how you bring about lasting change.

Patricia Zengerle [Reuters].

Iran/Situation in the Middle East

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Getting back to the unrest in the Middle East and North Africa, what concerns do you have about instability, especially in Saudi Arabia, as the demonstrations spread? Do you see—foresee any effects on oil prices? And talking about Iran, can you comment about the unrest there more? What is your message to the Iranian people, in light of there was some criticism that your administration didn't speak out strongly enough after their last—the demonstrations in Iran after their elections? Excuse me.

The President. That's okay. Well, first of all, on Iran, we were clear then, and we are clear now, that what has been true in Egypt should be true in Iran, which is that people should be able to express their opinions and their grievances and seek a more responsive government. What's been different is the Iranian Government's response, which is to shoot people and beat people and arrest people.

And my hope and expectation is, is that we're going to continue to see the people of Iran have the courage to be able to express their yearning for greater freedoms and a more representative government, understanding that America cannot ultimately dictate what happens inside of Iran any more than it could inside of Egypt. Ultimately, these are sovereign countries that are going to have to make their own decisions. What we can do is lend moral support to those who are seeking a better life for themselves.

Obviously, we're concerned about stability throughout the region. Each country is different. The message that we've sent even before the demonstrations in Egypt has been, to friend and foe alike, that the world is changing; that you have a young, vibrant generation within the Middle East that is looking for greater opportunity; and that if you are governing these countries, you've got to get out ahead of change. You can't be behind the curve.

And so I think that the thing that will actually achieve stability in that region is if young people, if ordinary folks end up feeling that there are pathways for them to feed their fami-

lies, get a decent job, get an education, aspire to a better life. And the more steps these governments are taking to provide these avenues for mobility and opportunity, the more stable these countries are.

You can't maintain power through coercion. At some level, in any society, there has to be consent. And that's particularly true in this new era where people can communicate not just through some centralized government or a state-run TV, but they can get on a smart phone or a Twitter account and mobilize hundreds of thousands of people.

My belief is that, as a consequence of what's happening in Tunisia and Egypt, governments in that region are starting to understand this. And my hope is, is that they can operate in a way that is responsive to this hunger for change, but always do so in a way that doesn't lead to violence.

Chip Reid [CBS News].

2012 Federal Budget/National Debt

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Actually, I'm going to have to get my glasses out to read these——

The President. That's a bad sign there, Chip. [*Laughter*]

Q. A little fine print, a little fine print in the budget, Mr. President. You said that this budget is not going to add to the credit card as of about the middle of the decade. And as Robert Gibbs might say, I'm not a budget expert, and I'm not an economist, but if you could just explain to me how you can say that when, if you look on one page, page 171, which I'm sure you've read—[*laughter*]—it is the central page in this—the deficits go from 1.1 trillion down to 768 billion, and they go down again all the way to 607 billion in 2015, and then they start to creep up again, and by 2021, it's at 774 billion. And the total over those 10 years, the total debt is 7.2 trillion on top of the 14 trillion we already have. How can you say that we're living within our means?

The President. Well, here's—let me be clear on what I'm saying, because I'm not suggesting that we don't have to do more. We still have all this accumulated debt as a consequence of the recession and as a consequence of a series of decisions that were made over the last decade. We've piled up. We've racked up a whole bunch of debt, and there is a lot of interest on that debt.

So in the same way that if you've got a credit card and you've got a big balance, you may not be adding to principal, you've still got all that interest that you've got to pay. Well, we've got a big problem in terms of accumulated interest that we're paying, and that's why we're going to have to whittle down further the debt on—that's already been accumulated. So that's problem number one.

And problem number two we already talked about, which is rising health care costs and programs like Medicaid and Medicare are going to—once you get past this decade, going to start zooming up again as a consequence of the population getting older and health care costs going up more rapidly than incomes and wages and revenues are going up.

So you've got those two big problems. What we've done is to try to take this in stages. What we say in our budget is, let's get control of our discretionary budget to make sure that whatever it is that we're spending on an annual basis, we're also taking in a similar amount. All right, that's step number one.

Step number two is going to make—is going to be how do we make sure that we're taking on these long-term drivers and how do we start whittling down the debt. And that's going to require entitlement reform, and it's going to require tax reform.

And in order to accomplish those two things, we're going to have to have a spirit of cooperation between Democrats and Republicans. And I think that's possible. I think that's what the American people are looking for. But what I think is important to do is not discount the tough choices that are required just to stabilize the situation. It doesn't solve it, but it stabilizes it. And if we can get that done, that starts introducing this concept of us being able to, in a serious way, cooperate to meet this fiscal challenge. And that will lay the predicate for us being able to solve some of these big problems

over the course of the next couple of years as well.

So again, I just want to repeat: The first step in this budget is to make sure that we're stabilizing the current situation. The second step is going to be to make sure that we're taking on some of these long-term drivers. But we've got to get control of the short-term deficit as well, and people are going to be looking for a signal for that, and the choices that we have made are some pretty tough choices, which is why I think you have been seeing some grumblings not just from the other party, but also from my own party about some of the decisions that we've made.

Chuck Todd [NBC News].

National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform/2012 Federal Budget

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Everything you have talked about—tax reform, the entitlement reform, two parties coming together—just happened in December in your fiscal commission. You had a majority consensus to do all this. It's now been shelved. It seems that you have not taken—I guess my question is what was the point of the fiscal commission? If you have this moment where you had Tom Coburn, your conservative friend in the United States Senate, sign on to this deal; Judd Gregg was also on this thing; you had Dick Durbin, your good friend from Illinois, Democrat—everything you just described in the answer to Chip and the answer to Ben just happened. Why not grab it?

The President. The notion that it has been shelved, I think, is incorrect. It still provides a framework for a conversation.

Part of the challenge here is that this town, let's face it, you guys are pretty impatient. If something doesn't happen today, then the assumption is it's just not going to happen, right? I've had this conversation for that last 2 years about every single issue that we worked on, whether it was health care or "don't ask, don't tell," on Egypt, right? We've had this monumental change over the last 3 weeks, well, why did it take 3 weeks? [*Laughter*] So I think that there's a tendency for us to assume that if it didn't happen today, it's not going to happen.

Well, the fiscal commission put out a framework. I agree with much of the framework; I disagree with some of the framework. It is true that it got 11 votes, and that was a positive sign. What's also true is, for example, is, is that the chairman of the House Republican budgeteers didn't sign on. He's got a little bit of juice when it comes to trying to get an eventual budget done. So he's got concerns. So I'm going to have to have a conversation with him, what would he like to see happen.

I'm going to have to have a conversation with those Democrats who didn't vote for it. There are some issues in there that, as a matter of principle, I don't agree with, where I think they didn't go far enough, or they went too far. So this is going to be a process in which each side, both in—in both Chambers of Congress, go back and forth and start trying to whittle their differences down until we arrive at something that has an actual chance of passage.

And that's my goal. I mean, my goal here is to actually solve the problem. It's not to get a good headline on the first day. My goal is, is that a year from now or 2 years from now, people look back and say, you know what, we actually started making progress on this issue.

Budget Debate

Q. What do you say, though, that it looks like, "No, you first," "No, you first," and nobody wants to have—everybody says, everything is on the table——

The President. But there will——

Q. ——but then nobody wants to talk about the table.

The President. Chuck, there was this—this was the same criticism people had right after the midterm election. If you had polled the press room and the conventional wisdom in Washington after the midterm, the assumption was, there's no way we were going to end up getting a tax deal that got the majority of both Democrats and Republicans. It was impossible, right? And we got it done.

So this is not a matter of you go first or I go first. This is a matter of everybody having a se-

rious conversation about where we want to go, and then ultimately getting in that boat at the same time so it doesn't tip over. And I think that can happen.

Julianna Goldman [Bloomberg News]. There you are.

Tax Reform/Deficit/2012 Federal Budget

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Your budget relies on revenue from tax increases to multinational corporations that ship jobs overseas and on increases on oil and gas industry. You've been calling on this for years. And if you couldn't get it through a Democratic Congress, why do you think you'll be able to get it through now? And also, doesn't it blunt your push for deficit-neutral corporate tax reform?

The President. Well, I continue to believe I'm right. [*Laughter*] So we're going to try again. I think what's different is everybody says now that they're really serious about the deficit. Well, if you're really serious about the deficit—not just spending, but you're serious about the deficit overall—then part of what you have to look at is unjustifiable spending through the Tax Code, through tax breaks that do not make us more competitive, do not create jobs here in the United States of America.

And the two examples you cite, I think, most economists would look at and they'd say these aren't contributing to our long-term economic growth. And if they're not, why are we letting some folks pay lower taxes than other folks who are creating jobs here in the United States and are investing? Why are we not investing in the energy sources of the future, just the ones in the past, particularly if the energy sources of the past are highly profitable right now and don't need a tax break?

So I think what may have changed is, if we are going to get serious about deficit reduction and debt reduction, then we've got to look at all the sources of deficit and debt. We can't be just trying to pick and choose and getting a hundred percent of our way.

The same is true, by the way, for Democrats. I mean, there are some provisions in this budget that are hard for me to take. You've got cities around the country and States around the country that are having a tremendously difficult time trying to balance their own budgets because of fallen revenue. They've got greater demands because folks have lost their jobs; the housing market is still in a tough way in a lot of these places. And yet part of what this budget says is we're going to reduce community development block grants by 10 percent. That's not something I'd like to do. But—and if it had come up a year ago or 2 years ago, I would have said no. Under these new circumstances, I'm saying yes to that. And so my expectation is, is that everybody is going to have to make those same sorts of compromises.

Now, with respect to corporate tax reform, the whole concept of corporate tax reform is to simplify, eliminate loopholes, treat everybody fairly. That is entirely consistent with saying, for example, that we shouldn't provide special treatment to the oil industry when they've been making huge profits and can afford to further invest in their companies without special tax breaks that are different from what somebody else gets.

Q. ——but you can't eliminate those——

The President. Well, what is absolutely true is that it's going to be difficult to achieve serious corporate tax reform if the formula is, lower our tax rates and let us keep all our special loopholes. If that's the formula, then we're not going to get it done. I wouldn't sign such a bill, and I don't think the American people would sign such a bill.

If you're a small-businessperson out on Main Street, and you're paying your taxes, and you find out that you've got some big company with billions of dollars and far-flung businesses all across the world, and they're paying a fraction of what you're paying in taxes, you'd be pretty irritated, and rightfully so.

And so the whole idea of corporate reform—corporate tax reform—is, yes, let's lower everybody's rates so American businesses are competitive with businesses all around the world, but in order to pay for it, to make sure that it doesn't add to our deficit, let's also make sure that these special interest loopholes that a lot of lobbyists have been working very hard on

to get into the Tax Code, let's get rid of those as well.

All right. April Ryan [American Urban Radio Networks]. Caught you by surprise, April.

2012 Federal Budget

Q. You did, sir. Thank you. Mr. President, I want to focus in on the least of these. You started your career of service as a community organizer, and now we are hearing from people like—organizations like the CBC is saying rebuilding our economy on the backs of the most vulnerable Americans is something that is simply not acceptable, like the cuts to the community service block grants, Pell grants, heating oil assistance, and freezing salaries of Federal workers. Now, Roderick Harrison, of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, says it's not good to make these types of cuts at a time of recession, instead of doing it at a time of recovery.

And also I need to ask you, have you been placing calls for your friend Rahm Emanuel, for his mayoral campaign in Chicago? Thank you.

The President. I'll take the last question first. I don't have to make calls for Rahm Emanuel. He seems to be doing just fine on his own. And he's been very busy shoveling snow out there. [*Laughter*] I've been very impressed with that. I never saw him shoveling around here. [*Laughter*]

Let me use Pell grants as an example of how we're approaching these difficult budget choices in a way that is sustainable but preserves our core commitment to expanding opportunity. When I came into office, I said I wanted to once again have America have the highest graduation rates, college graduation rates, of any country in the world, that we had been slipping. And so I significantly increased the Pell grant program by tens of billions of dollars. And so millions of young people are going to have opportunities through the Pell grant program that they didn't before, and the size of the Pell grant itself went up.

What we also did, partly because we were in a recessionary situation, and so more people were having to go back to school as opposed to work, what we also did was, for example, say that you can get Pell grants for summer school. Now we're in a budget crunch. The takeup rate on the Pell grant program has skyrocketed. The costs have gone up significantly. If we continue on this pace, sooner or later what's going to happen is, we're just going to have to chop off eligibility. We'll just have to say, that's it, we can't do this anymore, it's too expensive.

So instead what we did was how do we trim, how do we take a scalpel to the Pell grant program, make sure that we keep the increase for each Pell grant, make sure that the young people who are being served by the Pell grant program are still being served, but for example, on the summer school thing, let's eliminate that. That will save us some money, but the core functions of the program are sustained. That's how we're approaching all these cuts.

On the LIHEAP program, the home heating assistance program, we doubled the home heating assistance program when I first came into office, in part because there was a huge energy spike, and so folks—if we had just kept it at the same level, folks would have been in real trouble. Energy prices have now gone down, but the costs of the program have stayed the same. So what we've said is, well, let's go back to a more sustainable level. If it turns out that once again you see a huge energy spike, then we can revisit it. But let's not just assume because it's at a $5 billion level that each year we're going to sustain it a $5 billion level regardless of what's happening on the energy front.

Now, that doesn't mean that these aren't still tough cuts, because there are always more people who could use some help across the country than we have resources. And so it's still a tough decision, and I understand people's frustrations with some of these decisions. Having said that, my goal is to make sure that we're looking after the vulnerable; we're looking after the disabled; we're looking after our seniors; we're making sure that our education system is serving our kids so that they can compete in the 21st century; we're investing in the future, and doing that in a way that's sustainable and that we're paying for, as opposed to

having these huge imbalances where there are some things that aren't working that we're paying a lot of money for; there's some things that are underfunded. We're trying to make adjustments so that we've got a sustainable budget that works for us over the long term.

And by the way, there are just some things that just aren't working at all, so we've eliminated a couple hundred programs in this budget. On the education front, we're consolidating from 33 programs to 11 programs. There is waste and inefficiency there that is long overdue, and we identify a number of these programs that just don't work. Let's take that money out of those programs that don't work and put in money—that money in programs that do.

Q. But do you understand when they say, is the President feeling our pain, especially as you were a community organizer?

The President. I—look, I definitely feel folks' pain. Somebody is doing a book about the 10 letters that I get every day, and they came by to talk to me yesterday. And they said, what's the overwhelming impression that you get when you read these 10 letters a day? And what I told them is, I'm so inspired by the strength and resilience of the American people, but sometimes I'm also just frustrated by the number of people out there who are struggling, and you want to help every single one individually. You almost feel like you want to be a caseworker and just start picking up the phone and advocating for each of these people who are working hard, trying to do right by their families; oftentimes, through no fault of their own, they've had a tough time, particularly over these last couple of years.

So yes, it's frustrating. But my job is to make sure that we're focused over the long term: Where is it that we need to go? And the most important thing I can do as President is make sure that we're living within our means, getting a budget that is sustainable, investing in the future, and growing the economy. If I do that, then that's probably the most help I can give to the most number of people.

Jake Tapper [ABC News].

2011 Federal Budget/Detention of U.S. Government Contractor Raymond A. Davis in Pakistan

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. House Republicans, as you know, want to start cutting now, want to start cutting this year's budget. Are you willing to work with them in the next few weeks so as to avoid a Government shutdown? There's been talk of a downpayment on budget cuts that they would like to make for this year's budget.

And also, I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about the attempts to get American diplomat Ray Davis freed from Pakistan. Some have criticized the administration for putting pressure too publicly on what is essentially a weak Government, and I'm wondering if you could walk us through that process. Thanks.

The President. Sure. My goal is to work with the Republicans, both on the continuing resolution—and for those who are watching that don't know Washingtonese, the CR is a continuing resolution, a way to just keep Government going when you don't have an overall budget settled. And we didn't settle our overall budget from last year, so this is carryover business from last year, funding vital Government functions this year.

So I want to work with everybody, Democrats and Republicans, to get that resolved. I think it is important to make sure that we don't try to make a series of symbolic cuts this year that could endanger the recovery. So that's point number one.

What I'm going to be looking for is some common sense that the recovery is still fragile; we passed this tax cut package precisely to make sure that people had more money in their pockets, that their paychecks were larger, were provided these tax credits and incentives for businesses. But if the steps that we take then prompt thousands of layoffs in State or local government, or core vital functions of Government aren't performed properly, well, that could also have a dampening impact on our recovery as well.

So my measure is going to be are we doing things in a sensible way, meeting core functions,

not endangering our recovery. In some cases, like defense, for example—Secretary Gates has already testified—if we're operating—even operating under the current continuing resolution is putting significant strains on our ability to make sure our troops have what they need to perform their missions in Afghanistan. Further slashes would impair our ability to meet our mission.

And so we've got to be careful. Again, let's use a scalpel, let's not use a machete. And if we do that, there should be no reason at all for a Government shutdown. And I think people should be careful about being too loose in terms of talking about a Government shutdown, because this has—this is not an abstraction. People don't get their Social Security checks. They don't get their veterans payments. Basic functions shut down. And it—that also would have a adverse effect on our economic recovery. It would be destabilizing at a time when I think everybody is hopeful that we can start growing this economy quicker.

So I'm looking forward to having a conversation. But the key here is for people to be practical and not to score political points. That's true for all of us. And I think if we take that approach we can navigate the situation short term and then deal with the problem long term.

With respect to Mr. Davis, our diplomat in Pakistan, we've got a very simple principle here that every country in the world that is party to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations is—has upheld in the past and should uphold in the future, and that is, if our diplomats are in another country, then they are not subject to that country's local prosecution.

We respect it with respect to diplomats who are here. We expect Pakistan, that's a signatory and recognized Mr. Davis as a diplomat, to abide by the same convention.

And the reason this is an important principle is, if it starts being fair game on our Ambassadors around the world, including in dangerous places, where we may have differences with those governments, and our Ambassadors or our various Embassy personnel are having to deliver tough messages to countries where we disagree with them on X, Y, Z, and they start being vulnerable to prosecution locally, that's untenable. It means they can't do their job. And that's why we respect these conventions, and every country should as well.

So we're going to be continuing to work with the Pakistani Government to get this person released. And obviously, part of—for those who aren't familiar with the background on this, a couple of Pakistanis were killed in a incident between Mr. Davis within—in Pakistan. So obviously, we're concerned about the loss of life. We're not callous about that. But there's a broader principle at stake that I think we have to uphold.

Q. How serious have your threats been to the Pakistani Government, if they don't hand him over?

The President. Well, I'm not going to discuss the specific exchanges that we've had. But we've been very firm about this being an important priority. Okay?

Ed Henry [CNN].

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I want to go back to Egypt because there was some perception around the world that maybe you were too cautious during that crisis and were kind of a step behind the protesters. I know that, as you said, there was dramatic change in 3 weeks, and some of us wanted it to go even faster than that. But having said that, I realize it's a complicated situation. It was evolving rapidly. But now as these protests grow throughout the Mideast and North Africa—you said before your message to the governments involved was make sure you're not violent with peaceful protesters. But what's your message to the protesters? Do you want them to taste freedom? Or do you want them to taste freedom only if it will also bring stability to our interests in the region?

The President. Well, first of all, without revisiting all the events over the last 3 weeks, I think history will end up recording that at every juncture in the situation in Egypt, that we were on the right side of history. What we didn't do was pretend that we could dictate the

outcome in Egypt, because we can't. So we were very mindful that it was important for this to remain an Egyptian event; that the United States did not become the issue; but that we sent out a very clear message that we believed in an orderly transition, a meaningful transition, and a transition that needed to happen not later, but sooner. And we were consistent on that message throughout.

Particularly if you look at my statements, I started talking about reform 2 weeks or 2½ weeks before Mr. Mubarak ultimately stepped down. And at each juncture I think we calibrated it just about right. And I would suggest that part of the test is that what we ended up seeing was a peaceful transition, relatively little violence, and relatively little, if any, anti-American sentiment or anti-Israel sentiment or anti-Western sentiment. And I think that testifies to the fact that in a complicated situation, we got it about right.

My message, I think, to demonstrators going forward is, your aspirations for greater opportunity, for the ability to speak your mind, for a free press, those are absolutely aspirations we support.

As was true in Egypt, ultimately, what happens in each of these countries will be determined by the citizens of those countries. And even as we uphold these universal values, we do want to make sure that transitions do not degenerate into chaos and violence. That's not just good for us, that's good for those countries. The history of successful transitions to democracy have generally been ones in which peaceful protests led to dialogue, led to discussion, led to reform, and ultimately led to democracy.

And that's true in countries like Eastern Europe. That was also true in countries like Indonesia, a majority Muslim country that went through some of these similar transitions, but didn't end up doing it in such a chaotic fashion that it ended up dividing the societies fundamentally.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. But has it improved the chances of something like Mideast peace, or has it made it more complicated in your mind?

The President. I think it offers an opportunity as well as a challenge. I think the opportunity is that when you have the kinds of people who were in Tahrir Square, feeling that they have hope and they have opportunity, then they're less likely to channel all their frustrations into anti-Israeli sentiment or anti-Western sentiment, because they see the prospect of building their own country. That's a positive.

The challenge is that democracy is messy, right? And so they're—and if you're trying to negotiate with a democracy, you don't just have one person to negotiate with, you have to negotiate with a wider range of views.

But I like the odds of actually getting a better outcome in the former circumstance than in the latter.

All right. Mike Emanuel [FOX News].

2012 Federal Budget/Job Growth

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. The number-one concern for many Americans right now is jobs. Taking a look at your budget, there are tax hikes proposed for energy, for higher income people, and also for replenishing the State unemployment funds. Do you worry about the impact on jobs, sir?

The President. Well, actually, if you look at that budget, there's a whole bunch of stuff in there for job creation. I think some folks noted, for example, our infrastructure proposals, which would create millions of jobs around the country; our investments in research and development and clean energy have the potential for creating job growth in industries of the future.

My belief that the high-end tax cuts for—or the Bush tax cuts for the high end of the population—folks like me—my belief is, is that that doesn't in any way impede job growth. And most economists agree.

We had this debate in December. Now, we compromised in order to achieve an overall package that reduced taxes for all Americans, and so I believe—I continue to believe that was a smart compromise. But when it comes to over the long term, maintaining tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, when that will mean additional deficits of a trillion dollars, if

you're serious about deficit reduction, you don't do that.

And as I said, I think most economists—even ones that tend to lean to the right or are more conservative—would agree that that's not the best way for us to approach deficit reduction and debt reduction.

So I do think it's important, as we think about corporate tax reform, as we think about individual tax reform, to try to keep taxes as simple as possible and as low as possible. But we also have to acknowledge that, in the same way that families have to pay for what they buy, well, Government has to pay for what it buys. And if we believe that it's important for us to have a strong military, that doesn't come for free. We've got to pay for it. If we think that we have to take care of our veterans when they come home—and not just salute on Memorial Day, but we actually have to work with folks who have posttraumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury—well, that requires services that are very labor intensive and expensive.

If we think it's important that our senior citizens continue to enjoy health care in their golden years, that costs money. If we think that after a flood, we help out our neighbors and our fellow citizens so that they can recover, we've got to pay for it.

So the circumstance that's changed—earlier Julianna asked why I think I might get a deal. I think some of the questions here generally have centered about what's going to be different this time. My hope is that what's different this time is, is we have an adult conversation where everybody says, here's what's important and here's how we're going to pay for it.

Now, there are going to be some significant disagreements about what people think is important. And then that's how democracy should work. And at the margins, I think that I'll end up having to compromise on some things. Hopefully, others will have that same spirit.

Budget Debate

Q. As part of that adult conversation, sir, what if they say deeper spending cuts before you consider tax hikes?

The President. Well, I think it just depends on what exactly you're talking about. And I think that there should be a full, open debate with the American people: Are we willing to cut millions of young people off when it comes to student loans that help kids and families on their college education? Are we only serious about education in the abstract, but when it's the concrete, we're not willing to put the money into it? If we're cutting infant formula to poor kids, is that who we are as a people?

I mean, we're going to have to have those debates. Particularly if it turns out that making those cuts doesn't really make a big dent in the long-term debt and deficits, then I think the American people may conclude let's have a more balanced approach. But that's what we're going to be talking about over the next couple months. As I said, I know everybody would like to see it get resolved today. It probably will not be. [*Laughter*] That's a fair prediction.

All right, I'm going to take one last question here. Jackie Calmes [New York Times].

2012 Federal Budget/Budget Debate/Economic Stabilization

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I'd almost given up there.

The President. Oh, don't give up. [*Laughter*]

Q. You've correctly suggested that the media can be impatient about seeing you—seeing both sides come to a deal, but this is your third budget, your third year of your Presidency. You've said many times that you'd rather be a one-party—one-term President if it means you've done the hard things that need to be done. Now, I know you're not going to stand there and invite Republicans to the negotiating table today to start hashing it all out, but why not? And since you're not, though, what more are you doing to build the spirit of cooperation you mentioned earlier needs to happen before there is bipartisanship?

And finally, do you think the markets will wait 2 years?

The President. I should have written all this down, Jackie. [*Laughter*] I'm running out of room here in my brain.

Q. I'm happy to repeat my question. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, let me just speak to this generally. It's true that this is my third budget. The first two budgets were in the midst of the worst recession since the Great Depression, so we had a different set of priorities. And I said it at the time. In each of those budgets, what I said was, the deficit's going up and we are compiling some additional debt, but the reason is because it is so important for us to avoid going into a depression or having a longer recession than is necessary.

Because the most important thing that we had to do in order to limit the amount of increased debt and bigger deficits is to grow the economy some more. So that was our priority. That was our focus.

This third budget reflects a change in focus. The economy is now growing again. People are more hopeful. And we've created more than a million jobs over the last year. Employers are starting to hire again, and businesses are starting to invest again. And in that environment, now that we're out of the depths of the crisis, we have to look at these long-term problems and these medium-term problems in a much more urgent and a much more serious way.

Now, in terms of what I'm doing with the Republicans, I'm having conversations with them and Democratic leadership. I did before this budget was released, and I will do so afterwards. And I probably will not give you a play-by-play of every negotiation that takes place. I expect that all sides will have to do a little bit of posturing on television and speak to their constituencies, and rally the troops and so forth. But ultimately, what we need is a reasonable, responsible, and initially, probably, somewhat quiet and toned-down conversation about, all right, where can we compromise and get something done.

And I'm confident that will be the spirit that congressional leaders take over the coming months, because I don't think anybody wants to see our recovery derailed. And all of us agree that we have to cut spending, and all of us agree that we have to get our deficits under control and our debt under control. And all of us agree that part of it has to be entitlements.

So there's a framework there. That speaks, by the way, again, to the point I made with you, Chuck, about the Commission. I think the Commission changed the conversation. I think they gave us a basic framework, and within that framework, we're going to have to have some tough conversations, and the devil is going to be in the details.

But look, I was glad to see yesterday Republican leaders say, how come you didn't talk about entitlements? I think that's progress, because what we had been hearing made it sound as if we just slashed deeper on education or other provisions in domestic spending that somehow that alone was going to solve the problem. So I welcomed—I think it was significant progress that there is an interest on all sides on those issues.

In terms of the markets, I think what the markets want to see is progress. The markets understand that we didn't get here overnight and we're not going to get out overnight. What they want to see is that we have the capacity to work together. If we—if they see us chipping away at this problem in a serious way, even if we haven't solved a hundred percent of it all in one fell swoop, then that will provide more confidence that Washington can work.

And more than anything, that's not just what the markets want; that's what the American people want. They just want some confirmation that this place can work. And I think it can.

All right. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:59 a.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to White House Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney; Rep. Paul D. Ryan; former White House Chief of Staff Rahm I. Emanuel; Washington Post reporter Eli Saslow; and former President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. A reporter referred to Roderick J. Harrison, senior fellow, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medals of Freedom
February 15, 2011

Thank you so much. Everyone please be seated, and welcome to the White House. Some of you have been here before. [*Laughter*]

This is one of the things that I most look forward to every year. It's a chance to meet with, and more importantly, honor, some of the most extraordinary people in America and around the world.

President Kennedy once said, during a tribute to the poet Robert Frost, that a nation reveals itself not only by the men and women it produces, but by the men and women that it honors, the people that it remembers. I heartily agree. When you look at the men and women who are here today, it says something about who we are as a people.

When we award this medal to a Congressman John Lewis, it says that we aspire to be a more just, more equal, more perfect Union. When we award it to a Jasper Johns, it says we value the original and the imaginative. When we award it to a Warren Buffett, it says we'd all like to be so humble and wise and maybe make a little money along the way. [*Laughter*] And when we award it to former President George H.W. Bush, it says we celebrate an extraordinary life of service and of sacrifice.

This year's Medal of Freedom recipients reveal the best of who we are and who we aspire to be. In 1970, John Adams and a handful of unpaid attorneys and law students salvaged some old desks and set up an environmental law firm in New York City. For 36 years, John sat at the same desk. But the group he cofounded, the Natural Resources Defense Council, grew well beyond it. "Our first obligation is to the environment," John once said. "If people want to protect the environment, we'll support their efforts. If not, we'll play hardball."

With more than 1 million members, NRDC has won landmark cases and helped pass landmark laws to clean up our air and water, protect our forests and wildlife, and keep our climate safe. So Rolling Stone put it best: "If the planet has a lawyer, it's John Adams." [*Laughter*]

As a girl, Marguerite Ann Johnson endured trauma and abuse that actually led her to stop speaking. But as a performer, and ultimately a writer, a poet, Maya Angelou found her voice. It's a voice that's spoken to millions, including my mother, which is why my sister is named Maya. [*Laughter*]

By holding on, even amid cruelty and loss, and then expanding to a sense of compassion, an ability to love, by holding on to her humanity, she has inspired countless others who have known injustice and misfortune in their own lives. I won't try to say it better than Maya Angelou herself, who wrote that:

> History, despite its wrenching pain,
> Cannot be unlived, and if faced with courage,
> Need not be lived again.
> Lift up your eyes upon
> The day breaking for you.
> Give birth again
> To the dream.

In 1942, an 11-year-old boy from Omaha, Nebraska, invested his entire fortune in six shares of City Services Preferred at $38 per share. The stock soon dropped sharply, devastating his holdings. [*Laughter*] But true to form, the boy did not panic. He held those shares until the stock rebounded, earning himself a small profit. Things got a little bit better after that. [*Laughter*]

Today, we know Warren Buffett not only as one of the world's richest men, but also one of the most admired and respected. Unmoved by financial fads, he has doggedly sought out value, put his weight behind companies with promise, and demonstrated that integrity isn't just a good trait, it is good for business. And yet for all the money he's earned, you don't see Warren Buffett wearing fancy suits or driving fancy cars. Instead, you see him devoting the vast majority of his wealth to those around the world who are suffering or sick or in need of help. And he uses his stature as a leader to press others of great means to do the same. A

philanthropist is a lover of humanity, and there's no word that fits Warren better. I should point out he's so thrifty I had to give him a White House tie—[*laughter*]—the last time he came here to visit. His was looking a little shredded. [*Laughter*] So then when Bill Gates came, he wanted one too. [*Laughter*]

It has been noted that Jasper Johns's work, playing off familiar images, have transfixed people around the world. Historians will tell you that he helped usher in the artistic movements that would define the latter half of the 20th century. Many would say he is one of the greatest artists of our time. And yet of his own efforts he has simply said, "I'm just trying to find a way to make pictures." Just trying to find a way to make pictures.

Like great artists before him, Jasper Johns pushed the boundaries of what art could be and challenged others to test their own assumptions. He didn't do it for fame, he didn't do it for success, although he earned both. As he said, "I assumed that everything would lead to complete failure, but I decided that it didn't matter—that would be my life." [*Laughter*] We are richer as a society because it was. And Jasper, you've turned out fine. [*Laughter*]

When you are among the youngest of nine children, you develop a strong sense of empathy. When those children are the Kennedys, you also develop a strong set of diplomatic skills just to be heard. Both traits helped Jean Kennedy Smith follow her siblings into public service. When her brother, President Kennedy, visited Ireland in 1963, he promised he'd be back in the springtime. Thirty years later, it was left to Jean to return for him. As President Clinton's Ambassador to Ireland, Jean was as vital as she was unconventional, helping brave men and women find the courage to see past the scars of violence and mistrust and come together to forge a lasting peace.

Touched by experiences in her own life, Jean also founded the VSA program, helping people with disabilities discover the joys of learning through the arts, changing the lives of those it has served. And today, her mission has spread to more than 50 countries and touched millions of lives, ensuring that the family business remains alive and well.

By the time she was 21, Gerda Klein had spent 6 years living under Nazi rule, three of them in concentration camps. Her parents and brother had been taken away. Her best friend had died in her arms during a 350-mile death march. And she weighed only 68 pounds when she was found by American forces in an abandoned bicycle factory. But Gerda survived. She married the soldier who rescued her. And ever since—as an author, a historian, and a crusader for tolerance—she has taught the world that it is often in our most hopeless moments that we discover the extent of our strength and the depth of our love.

"I pray you never stand at any crossroads in your own lives," she says, "but if you do, if the darkness seems so total, if you think there is no way out, remember, never ever give up."

That's a quote that would be familiar to our next honoree. There's a quote inscribed over a doorway in Nashville, where students first refused to leave lunch counters 51 years ago this February. And the quote said: "If not us, then who? If not now, then when?" It's a question John Lewis has been asking his entire life. It's what led him back to the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma after he had already been beaten within an inch of his life days before. It's why, time and again, he faced down death so that all of us could share equally in the joys of life. It's why all these years later, he is known as the conscience of the United States Congress, still speaking his mind on issues of justice and equality. And generations from now, when parents teach their children what is meant by courage, the story of John Lewis will come to mind, an American who knew that change could not wait for some other person or some other time; whose life is a lesson in the fierce urgency of now.

An optometrist from New York, Tom Little could have pursued a lucrative career. Instead, he guided—he was guided by his faith, and he set out to heal the poorest of the poor in Afghanistan. For 30 years, amid invasion and civil war, the terror of the Taliban, the spread of insurgency, he and his wife Libby helped bring

Afghans, literally, the miracle of sight. Last summer, Tom and his team of doctors and nurses were ambushed and senselessly murdered. Today we remember and honor Dr. Tom Little, a humanitarian in the truest sense of the word; a man who not only dedicated his life to others, but who lived that lesson of Scripture: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Yo-Yo Ma has been a concert cellist since the age of 5. Despite being a late bloomer—[*laughter*]—he went on to record over 75 albums and win 16 Grammys—which means I'm only 14 behind him. [*Laughter*] While Yo-Yo could have just settled for being the world's greatest cellist, he's said that even greater than his passion for music is his passion for people. And I can testify to this. There are few people you'll meet with just the exuberance and joy that Yo-Yo possesses. And so he's spent much of his life traveling the world, training and mentoring thousands of students, from Lebanon and Korea to the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra. A member of my Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, he has been named a Messenger of Peace by the United Nations, and we understand why. In his words, "When we enlarge our view of the world, we deepen our understanding of our own lives."

For Sylvia Mendez, a lifelong quest for equality began when she was just 8 years old. Outraged that their daughter had to attend a segregated school, Sylvia's parents linked arms with other Latino families to fight injustice in a California Federal court, a case that would pave the way for *Brown* v. *Board of Education*. The next year, when a classmate taunted Sylvia saying that Mexicans didn't belong there, she went home in tears, begging to leave the school. Her mother wouldn't have it. She told Sylvia: "Don't you realize that's why we went to court? You are just as good as he is." And Sylvia took those words to heart. And ever since, she has made it her mission to spread a message of tolerance and opportunity to children of all backgrounds and all walks of life.

Growing up in communist East Germany, Angela Merkel dreamed of freedom. And when the Wall finally crumbled and Germany was reunited, she broke barriers of her own, becoming the first East German, and the first woman, to become Chancellor of Germany.

To America, Chancellor Merkel and the country she leads are among our closest allies. To me, she is a trusted global partner and a friend. To people around the world, the story of Angela Merkel is an inspiration. "Everything is possible," she's said, something the world has seen again in recent weeks. "Freedom does not come about of itself. It must be struggled for, and then defended anew, every day of our lives."

Chancellor Merkel isn't here today. She'll be visiting me for a visit—an official visit soon, and so I look forward to presenting her the award when she comes.

Stan Musial. His brilliance could come in blinding bursts: hitting five home runs in a single day's doubleheader; leading the league in singles, doubles, triples, and RBIs over a single season; three World Series; first-ballot Hall of Famer; worthy of one of the greatest nicknames in sports, Stan the Man. [*Laughter*] My grandfather was Stan, by the way, so I used to call him "the Man" too, Stan. [*Laughter*]

Stan Musial made that brilliance burn for two decades. Stan matched his hustle with humility. He retired with 17 records, even as he missed a season in his prime to serve his country in the Navy. He was the first player to make—get this—$100,000. [*Laughter*] Even more shocking, he asked for a pay cut when he didn't perform up to his own expectations. You can imagine that happening today. [*Laughter*] Stan remains, to this day, an icon, untarnished; a beloved pillar of the community; a gentleman you'd want your kids to emulate. "I hope I've given [baseball] nearly as much as I've gotten from it," Stan wrote in his memoirs, knocking it out of the park one more time.

When Bill Russell was in junior high, he was cut from his basketball team. [*Laughter*] He got better after that. [*Laughter*] He led the University of San Francisco to two championships. In 13 seasons with the Boston Celtics, he won 11 championships, a record unmatched in any sport. Won two while also serving as the team's coach, and so happens, he also was the

first African American ever to hold such a position as a coach in a major league sports team of any sort. More than any athlete of his era, Bill Russell came to define the word "winner."

And yet whenever someone looks up at all 6′9″ of Bill Russell—I just did—[*laughter*]—I always feel small next to him—and asks, "Are you a basketball player?"—surprisingly, he gets this more than you think, this question—[*laughter*]—he says, "No." He says: "That's what I do, that's not what I am. I'm not a basketball player. I am a man who plays basketball."

Bill Russell, the man, is someone who stood up for the rights and dignity of all men. He marched with King; he stood by Ali. When a restaurant refused to serve the Black Celtics, he refused to play in the scheduled game. He endured insults and vandalism, but he kept on focusing on making the teammates who he loved better players, and made possible the success of so many who would follow. And I hope that one day, in the streets of Boston, children will look up at a statue built not only to Bill Russell the player, but Bill Russell the man.

The Bronx-born son of Irish immigrants, John Sweeney was shaped by three things. His family—his mother was a maid, his father was a bus driver—instilled in him that fundamentally American idea that through hard work, we can make of our lives what we will. The church taught him our obligations to ourselves and one another. And as a child, he saw that by banding together in a union, we can accomplish great things that we can't accomplish alone. John devoted his career to the labor movement, adding working folks to its ranks and fighting for fair working conditions and fair wages. As the head of the AFL–CIO, he was responsible for dozens of unions with millions of working families. Family, faith, fidelity to the common good, these are the values that make John Sweeney who he is, values at the heart of a labor movement that has helped build the world's greatest middle class.

And finally, we recognize our last recipient, not simply for the years he spent as our 41st President. We honor George Herbert Walker Bush for service to America that spanned nearly 70 years. From a decorated Navy pilot who nearly gave his life in World War II to U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, from CIA Director to U.S. Envoy to China to the Vice Presidency, his life is a testament that public service is a noble calling.

As President, he expanded America's promise to new immigrants and people with disabilities. He reduced nuclear weapons. He built a broad international coalition to expel a dictator from Kuwait. When democratic revolutions swept across Eastern Europe, it was the steady diplomatic hand of President Bush that made possible an achievement once thought impossible, ending the cold war without firing a shot.

I would add that, like the remarkable Barbara Bush, his humility and his decency reflects the very best of the American spirit. Those of you who know him, this is a gentleman, inspiring citizens to become points of light in service to others, teaming up with a one-time political opponent to champion relief for the victims of the Asian tsunami, the Hurricane Katrina, and then, just to cap it off, well into eighties, he decides to jump out of airplanes—[*laughter*]—because, as he explains, "It feels good."

These are the recipients of the 2010 Medal of Freedom. So now it is my great pleasure and my great honor to present them with their medals.

[*At this point, Lt. Cmdr. John F. McCarthy, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.*]

I know that people try to observe decorum when they're here in the White House—[*laughter*]—but I'd welcome everybody to stand and acknowledge these extraordinary men and women of the 2011 [2010]* Medal of Freedom.

All right, everybody. Now you can see why I love this day, and I hope everyone has a wonderful time during the reception. Thank you so

* White House correction.

much for your attendance. And again, to our honorees, thanks for setting such an extraordinary example for all of us. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng; Kurt Klein, husband of Gerda W. Klein; Elizabeth Little, wife of Tom Little; former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali; and former First Lady Barbara Bush. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Lt. Cmdr. John F. McCarthy, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President.

Statement on Serbian National Day
February 15, 2011

On behalf of the American people, I extend my best wishes to all those who are observing Serbian National Day. The United States and Serbia share an important partnership based on mutual respect and shared goals. Here in America, those of Serbian descent contribute to the fabric of American life. I look forward to a continued friendship between our two countries.

Remarks on the America's Great Outdoors Initiative
February 16, 2011

Thank you very much. Everybody, please have a seat. Well, welcome to the White House, everybody. It is great to have you here. What better place to hold our Great Outdoors event than right here inside the East Room. [*Laughter*] We thought it might be a little chilly for some of you. Not the folks from Montana. [*Laughter*] Now, while an indoor celebration of the great outdoors may seem strange, it is worth noting that the White House is actually inside a 82-acre national park, including an area once found to have the "densest squirrel population known to science." [*Laughter*] This is true. So we've got that going for us. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Sally for the terrific introduction. I asked her if she brought me any gear. She said that Secret Service wouldn't let her, otherwise she would have. [*Laughter*]

I also want to make a couple of acknowledgements, people who have worked so hard on this initiative, and I want to make sure that they get all the credit in the world: my great Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, is here; my outstanding Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack. Tom's still recovering from the Super Bowl—big Steelers fan. [*Laughter*] Went down to the game, all that stuff. Had the towel. [*Laughter*]

Administrator of the EPA, Lisa Jackson; Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, Nancy Sutley; Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Jo-Ellen Darcy; and somebody I am just thrilled to have here because this is my model for public service and just—not only a great former Senator, but also just a class act and a wonderful gentleman, who I have not seen in a while, John Warner of the great Commonwealth of Virginia. Nice to see you, John. Thank you.

We also have—in addition to Sally, I want to make sure that everybody knows who's standing behind me here—Dusty Crary, who's a rancher from Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Committee—Dusty; Sam Solomon, the president and CEO of the Coleman Company; John Tomke, president, Sporting Conservation Council, Ducks Unlimited; Troy Uentillie, Navajo Nation member and the Sherman BIE School; and Rebecca Wodder, president of American Rivers. All these folks have just done a lot of work to make this day possible.

Now, in 1786, Thomas Jefferson described the view from Monticello. "How sublime to

look down into the workhouse of nature," he wrote. "To see her clouds, hail, snow, rain, thunder, all fabricated at our feet." To most Americans at the time, Jefferson's experience was a familiar one. The vast majority of the continent was wilderness. No matter where you lived, you didn't have to travel far to find acres of open fields and unspoiled forests.

But in the years that followed, Americans began to push westward. Cities sprang up along riverbanks and railroad tracks. The Nation grew so fast that by 1890, the Census Director announced that he could no longer identify an American frontier. And yet, in the midst of so much expansion, so much growth, so much progress, there were a few individuals who had the foresight to protect our most precious national treasures, even in our most trying times.

So at the height of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln agreed to set aside more than 60 square miles of land in the Yosemite Valley—land he had never seen—on the condition that it be preserved for public use. Teddy Roosevelt, of course, our greatest conservation President, wrote that "there is nothing more practical in the end than the preservation of beauty." Even FDR, in the midst of the Great Depression, enabled the National Park Service to protect America's most iconic landmarks, from Mount Rushmore to the Statue of Liberty. So conservation became not only important to America, but it became one of our greatest exports, as America's beauty shone as a beacon to the world and other countries started adopting conservation measures because of the example that we had set.

Protecting this legacy has been the responsibility of all who serve this country. But behind that action, the action that's been taken here in Washington, there's also the story of ordinary Americans who devoted their lives to protecting the land that they loved.

That's what Horace Kephart and George Masa did. This is a wonderful story. Two men, they met in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina, each had moved there to start a new life. Horrified that their beloved wilderness was being clearcut at a rate of 60 acres a day, Horace and George worked with other members of the community to get the land set aside. The only catch was that they had to raise $10 million to foot the bill.

But far from being discouraged, they helped rally one of the poorest areas in the country to the cause. A local high school donated the proceeds from a junior class play. Preachers held "Smokey Mountain Sunday" services and encouraged their congregations to donate. Local businesses chipped in. And students from every grade in the city of Asheville—which was still segregated at the time—made a contribution.

So stories like these remind us what citizenship is all about. And by the way, last year, Michelle and I, we were able to walk some of the trails near Asheville and benefit from the foresight of people that had come before us. Our daughters, our sons were able to enjoy what not only Teddy Roosevelt did, but what ordinary folks did all across the country. It embodies that uniquely American idea that each of us has an equal share in the land around us and an equal responsibility to protect it.

And it's not just the iconic mountains and parks that we protect. It's the forests where generations of families have hiked and picnicked and connected with nature. It's the park down the street where kids play after school. It's the farmland that's been in the family longer than anybody can remember. It's the rivers where we fish; it's the forests where we hunt.

These days, our lives are only getting more complicated, more busy. And we're glued to our phones and our computers for hours on end. I have to—Michelle and I, we're constantly having to monitor our kids. "Get outside. Turn off the TV. Put away the Skype." [*Laughter*]

Cars and buses shuttle us from one place to another. We see our kids spending more and more time on the couch. For a lot of folks, it's easy to go days without stepping on a single blade of grass.

At times like these, we have to ask ourselves: What can we do to break free from the routine and reconnect with the world around us? What can we do to get our kids off the couch and out

the door? And by the way, because I'm a smart husband, I here want to point out all the great things that Michelle is doing with the "Let's Move!" initiative to help kids stay active and healthy.

Today, our open spaces are more precious than ever, and it's more important than ever that we come together to protect them for the next generation.

So in my first months of office, I signed a public lands bill that many of you worked on that designated 2 million acres of wilderness, over 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers, and three national parks. I'm very proud of that. And some of the Members of Congress who worked with us on that are here today, and we're very proud of them.

But at a time when America's open spaces are controlled by a patchwork of groups, from government to land trusts to private citizens, it's clear that conservation in the 21st century is going to take more than just what we can do here in Washington. Just like the story of the Great Smoky Mountains, meeting the new test of environmental stewardship means finding the best ideas at the grassroots level. It means helping States, communities, and nonprofits protect their own resources. And it means figuring out how the Federal Government can be a better partner in those efforts.

And that's why last year, we launched the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. Over the last 10 months, members of my administration have held more than 50 listening sessions with over 10,000 people, from hunters and fishermen to tribal leaders and young people. And together, we've laid the foundation for a smarter, more community-driven environmental strategy.

To make it easier for families to spend time outside no matter where they live, we're going to work with cities and States to build and improve urban parks and waterways and make it easier to access public lands.

To encourage young people to put down the remote or the video games and get outside, we're going to establish a new Conservation Service Corps, so they can build a lifelong relationship with their natural heritage. And this is something I know Ken cares deeply about.

To help set aside land for conservation and to promote recreation, we're proposing to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund for only the third time in our history. And we're intending to pay for it with existing oil and gas revenues, because our attitude is, if you take something out of the Earth, you have a responsibility to give a little bit back to the Earth.

So these are the right steps to take for our environment. But they're also the right steps to take for our country. They help spur the economy. They create jobs by putting more Americans back to work in tourism and recreation. They help inspire a new generation of scientists to learn how the world works. They help Americans stay healthier by making it easier to spend time outside. And they'll help carry forth our legacy as a people who don't just make decisions based on short-term gains of any one group, but on what's best for the entire Nation in the long run.

So working together to protect the environment we share, lifting up the best ideas wherever we find them, preserving the great outdoors for our children and for their children, that's our responsibility.

The great Rachel Carson once wrote that "The real wealth of the Nation lies in the resources of the Earth: soil, water, forests, minerals, wildlife. . . . Their administration is not properly, and cannot be, a matter of politics." Something more than politics, that was the call echoed by Jefferson and Lincoln and Roosevelt. It's the call that has driven generations of Americans to do their part to protect a small slice of the planet. And it's the call that we answer today.

So I'm grateful to all of you for the great work that you've already done. Keep it up. Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sarah M.R. "Sally" Jewell, president and chief executive officer, Recreational Equipment, Inc.; and John Tomke, Chair, Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Con-

servation Council (formerly the Sporting Conservation Council) and former president of the conservation organization Ducks Unlimited.

Statement on Lithuanian National Day
February 16, 2011

I send my best wishes to all those who are observing Lithuania's national day. Lithuanians have inspired the world by building a vibrant democracy and free market economy. Here in America, those who trace their roots to Lithuania have enriched all walks of our national life. As close allies, the United States and Lithuania have an unwavering commitment to our common security, and our partnership will only grow stronger in the years to come.

Statement on Kosovo Independence Day
February 17, 2011

I join all Americans in extending my best wishes to all those who are celebrating Kosovo's Independence Day. This is a time both to reflect upon Kosovo's long struggle for independence and to look forward to a future of greater security and prosperity for all of Kosovo's citizens. In America, those who have roots and family in Kosovo can be proud of the tremendous progress the country has made in its first 3 years of independence. I am confident that the friendship between our nations will continue to grow in the years ahead.

Remarks at Intel Corporation in Hillsboro, Oregon
February 18, 2011

Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Thank you so much. I am thrilled to be here. I want to first of all thank Paul for that introduction, and I want to thank Paul for agreeing to be part of our administration's new Council on Jobs and Competitiveness. I look forward to our continuing conversations when we meet next week.

I also want to acknowledge a wonderful Governor, Governor Kitzhaber, who's here. Thank you so much for all the work that you're doing. And the mayor of Hillsboro, Jerry Willey, thank you for the great work that you do.

And I want to thank everybody here at Intel for hosting us here today. We just had a amazing tour. One of my staff, he said, "It's like magic." [*Laughter*] He did. That's what he said. [*Laughter*]

I had a chance to see everything from an electron microscope to the inside of your microprocessor facility, the clean room. And I have to say, for all the gadgets you've got here, what actually most impressed me were the students and the science projects that I just had a chance to see. It gave them a chance to talk about things like quantum ternary algorithms—[*laughter*]—and it gave me a chance to nod my head and pretend that I understood what they were talking about. [*Laughter*]

So that was the high school guys. Then we went over to—[*laughter*]—seriously. Then we went over to meet some seventh graders, six girls, and it was wonderful that—all girls—who had started a science program after school that—it involved Legos. So I'm thinking, now this is more my speed. [*Laughter*] All right? I used to build some pretty mean Lego towers when I was a kid. [*Laughter*] I thought I could participate. Only these students used their Legos to build models—to build robots that were programmable to model brains that could repair broken bones. So I guess that's different than towers. [*Laughter*] It's not as good—[*laughter*]—the towers. [*Laughter*]

So I couldn't be prouder of these students and all the work that they've done. And in my State of the Union Address, I said that it's not just the winner of the Super Bowl who deserves to be celebrated, but also the winner of science fairs. And since the Packers beat my Bears—[*laughter*]—I'm reserving all my celebrating for the winners of the service fairs this year—the science fairs. They deserve applause. They deserve our applause and our praise, and they make me optimistic about America's future, just as visiting this facility makes me optimistic about America's future.

I'm also—I'm so proud of everybody here at Intel, not only because of what you do for these students or this community, because—but because of what you do for the country. A few weeks ago, I went to the Chamber of Commerce, and I talked about the responsibility that American businesses have to create jobs and invest in this country. And there are few major companies that take this responsibility as seriously as Intel.

In 1968, Intel started as one of Silicon Valley's first startups. And as you grew in leaps and bounds in the eighties and the nineties, you experienced the competitive pressures of globalization, the changes in technology that made it cheaper for many computer companies to start hiring and manufacturing overseas. And over the years, you've done some of this yourself. And yet, by and large, Intel has placed its bets on America.

As Paul just mentioned, three-fourths of your manufacturing still happens right here in the United States. This year, you'll hire another 4,000 American workers. You'll create good construction jobs upgrading your facilities and building new plants in Arizona and right here in Oregon.

And this kind of commitment has always been part of Intel's philosophy. The founder of this company, the legendary Andy Grove, has said that he's always felt two obligations. One obligation is to your shareholders. But the other obligation is to America, because a lot of what Intel has achieved has been made possible, in Andy's words, "by a climate of democracy, an economic climate and investment climate provided by our domicile, the United States."

Intel's possible because of the incredible capacity of America to reinvent itself and to allow people to live out their dreams. And so the question we have to ask ourselves now is, how do we maintain this climate that Andy Grove was talking about? How do we make sure that more companies like Intel invest here, manufacture here, hire here?

In a world that is more competitive than ever before, it's our job to make sure that America is the best place on Earth to do business. Now, part of that requires knocking down barriers that stand in the way of a company's growth, which is why I've proposed lowering the corporate tax rate and eliminating unnecessary regulations. It also requires getting our fiscal house in order, which is why I've proposed a 5-year spending freeze that will reduce the deficit by $400 billion. That's a freeze that will bring our annual domestic spending to its lowest share of the economy since Eisenhower was President.

Now, to really get our deficit under control, we're going to have to do more. And I want to work with both parties to find additional savings and get rid of excessive spending wherever it exists, whether it's defense spending or health care spending or spending in the Tax Code in the form of loopholes.

But even as we have to live within our means, we can't sacrifice investments in our future. If we want the next technological breakthrough that leads to the next Intel to happen here in the United States—not in China or not in Germany, but here in the United States—then we have to invest in America's research and technology, in the work of our scientists and our engineers.

If we want companies like yours to be able to move goods and information quickly and cheaply, we've got to invest in communication and transportation networks, like new roads and bridges, high-speed rail, high-speed Internet.

If we want to make sure Intel doesn't have to look overseas for skilled, trained workers, then we've got to invest in our people, in our schools, in our colleges, in our children.

Basically, if we want to win the future, America has to outbuild and outinnovate and outeducate and outhustle the rest of the world. That's what we've got to do.

So today I want to focus on one component of that, and that is education. That's what I want to talk about today.

Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education that goes beyond a high school degree. Times have changed. It used to be if you were willing to work hard, you could go to a factory, and you might be able to get a job that lasts 20 years, provide good benefits, provide decent salary. These days, those jobs are far and few between. Many of the jobs that are going to exist in the future, that exist now—like the ones here at Intel—require proficiency in math and science.

And yet today, as many as a quarter of our students aren't even finishing high school. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations. As we just heard Paul say, companies like Intel struggle to hire American workers who have the skills that fit their needs.

So we can't win the future if we lose the race to educate our children. Can't do it. In today's economy, the quality of a nation's education is one of the biggest predictors of a nation's success. It is what will determine whether the American Dream survives. And so it's the responsibility of all of us to get this right: parents, teachers, students, workers, business, and government. We're all going to have to focus on this like a laser.

And over the past 2 years, my administration's guiding philosophy has been that when it comes to reforming our schools, Washington shouldn't try to dictate all the answers. What we should be doing is rewarding and replicating the success of schools that have figured out a way to raise their standards and improve student performance.

And so here's what we did. Instead of pouring Federal money into a system that wasn't working, we launched a competition. We called it Race to the Top. To all 50 States we said, if you show us reforms that will lead to real results, we'll show you the money.

Race to the Top has turned out to be the most meaningful reform of our public schools in a generation. For less than 1 percent of what we spend on education each year, it has led over 40 States—40—to raise their standards for teaching and for learning. And these standards weren't developed in Washington, they were developed by Republican and Democratic Governors throughout the country.

Because we know that, other than parents, perhaps the biggest impact on a child's success comes from the man or woman who's sitting—or who is standing in front of the classroom, we've also focused a lot on teaching, on teachers. We want to make teaching an honored profession in our society. We want to reward good teachers. We want to stop making excuses for bad teachers. And over the next 10 years, with so many baby boomers retiring from our classrooms, we want to prepare 100,000 new teachers in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math, fields that will give the students the skills they need for the jobs that exist in places like Intel.

To ensure that higher education is within the reach of every American, we've extended—we put an end to unwarranted taxpayer subsidies that used to go to banks, and we put the savings towards making college more affordable for millions of students. And this year, we want to make permanent our tuition tax credit, which is worth $10,000 for 4 years of college.

And finally, to make sure anyone can get trained and prepared for whatever career they pursue, we want to revitalize America's community colleges. Not everybody needs to go to a 4-year college. And so we've launched a nationwide initiative to connect graduates that need a job with businesses that need their skills.

And we've drawn lessons from Intel's experience. For years, Intel has recognized the value of these kinds of partnerships between schools and businesses. This company understands that your success depends on a pipeline of skilled workers who are ready to fill high-tech jobs.

And so over the last decade, you've invested $50 million to support education in the State of

Oregon. You've started programs—[*applause*]. That's worth applause. You've started programs that get kids interested in engineering and technology as early as elementary school, like those six girls that I met. You've sponsored mentoring and engineering competitions for poor and underserved high school students. Your employer—your employees volunteer—some of you probably here have volunteered—as tutors in nearby schools and universities. You've helped train 7,000 Oregon teachers over the last 10 years.

Your science fairs, your talent searches are some of the largest and most prestigious in the world, producing multiple Nobel Prize winners. And I expect some of the students I met will qualify soon. [*Laughter*]

And we were so grateful that Intel was one of the four companies that initially joined our administration's nationwide campaign to boost math and science education here in America, as part of a new organization called Change the Equation.

So you guys have been pretty busy here at Intel. [*Laughter*] You've given countless students the chance to succeed, and for that you should be very proud. But you're not just a good corporate role model. You're a corporation who understands that investing in education is also a good business model. It's good for the bottom line.

A lot of your employees were engineering undergraduates at Oregon State or Portland State, right? How many Beavers here, by the way? You know my brother-in-law's the coach there. [*Laughter*] Just wanted to point that out. They're a young team, but they're on the move. [*Laughter*]

But here's what we know: If you can spark a student's interest in math or science, who would have otherwise dropped out, you might not just change a child's life, you may nurture the talent that one day discovers the breakthrough that changes this industry forever.

In fact, before I came here, I read a story about a young University of Oregon graduate. His name is Nabil Mistkawi, and he joined Intel as an engineer in 1993. After working with so many other employees who had doctorate degrees, Nabil decided to go back to school and get his Ph.D. in chemistry at Portland State University. And thanks to Intel, he was able to pay for his degree and keep his full-time job.

Now, during that time, Intel was trying to find a faster, more efficient way to process their microchips, but nobody could figure it out. And they asked at least eight other companies and research labs for help. Some said it couldn't be done. Others worked on it for nearly a year with no success. And so they asked Nabil if he wanted to give it a shot.

Within 3 days—3 days—he came up with a solution that is now saving this company millions of dollars a year. And I will not embarrass myself by trying to explain what his answer was—[*laughter*]—and most of you probably know how it works anyway. [*Laughter*] The point is, an investment in education paid off in a big way: for Nabil, for Intel, for the millions of workers and consumers who benefited from that discovery.

So for all the daunting statistics about our educational failings as a nation, for all the naysayers predicting America's decline—you've been hearing them lately—stories like this give me hope. Stories like these give me confidence that America will win the future. We know what works. We know how to succeed. We know how to do big things. And all across this Nation, in places just like this one, we have students and teachers, local leaders and companies, who are working together to make it happen.

When it comes to competing with other nations for the jobs and industries of the future, we are all on the same team: the American team. And if we start rowing in the same direction, I promise you, there is nothing that we cannot achieve. That's what you're proving here at Intel. That's what you're proving in the schools and colleges of this State. That's what America will prove in the months and years ahead.

Thank you, guys. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:53 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Paul S. Otellini, president and chief executive officer, Intel Corp.; and Gov. John A. Kitzhaber of Oregon. He also referred to his brother-in-law Craig M. Robinson.

Statement on the Situation in the Middle East
February 18, 2011

I am deeply concerned by reports of violence in Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen. The United States condemns the use of violence by governments against peaceful protesters in those countries and wherever else it may occur. We express our condolences to the family and friends of those who have been killed during the demonstrations. Wherever they are, people have certain universal rights, including the right to peaceful assembly. The United States urges the governments of Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen to show restraint in responding to peaceful protests and to respect the rights of their people.

Statement on Senator Jesse F. "Jeff" Bingaman, Jr.'s Decision Not To Seek Reelection
February 18, 2011

From his time in the Army to his service as New Mexico's attorney general and senior Senator, Jeff Bingaman has served this country and the people of New Mexico for more than three decades. He has been a tireless advocate for preserving America's natural resources and promoting a clean energy future. Jeff has gained the respect of his colleagues on both sides of the aisle in New Mexico and in Washington, and his voice on the floor of the Senate will be missed. Michelle and I offer Jeff our best wishes and deepest appreciation for his lifetime of service.

The President's Weekly Address
February 19, 2011

I'm speaking to you from just outside Portland, Oregon, where I'm visiting Intel, a company that helped pioneer the digital age. I just came from a tour of an assembly line where highly skilled technicians are building microprocessors that run everything from desktop computers to smartphones.

But these workers aren't just manufacturing high-tech computer chips, they're showing us how America will win the future. For decades, Intel has led the world in developing new technologies. But even as global competition has intensified, this company has invested, built, and hired right here in America. Three-quarters of Intel's products are made by American workers. And as the company expands operations in Oregon and builds a new plant in Arizona, it plans to hire another 4,000 people this year.

Companies like Intel are proving that we can compete, that instead of just being a nation that buys what's made overseas, we can make things in America and sell them around the globe. Winning this competition depends on the ingenuity and creativity of our private sector, which was on display in my visit today. But it's also going to depend on what we do as a nation to make America the best place on Earth to do business.

Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education beyond high school, many requiring proficiency in math and science. And yet today, we've fallen behind in math and in science and in graduation rates. As a result,

companies like Intel struggle to hire American workers with the skills that fit their needs.

If we want to win the global competition for new jobs and industries, we've got to win the global competition to educate our people. We've got to have the best trained, best skilled workforce in the world. That's how we'll ensure that the next Intel, the next Google, or the next Microsoft is created in America and hires American workers.

This is why, over the past 2 years, my administration has made education a top priority. We've launched a competition called Race to the Top, a reform that's lifting academic standards and getting results, not because Washington dictated the answers, but because States and local schools pursued innovative solutions. We're also making college more affordable for millions of students and revitalizing our community colleges so that folks can get the training they need for the careers they want. And as part of this effort, we've launched a nationwide initiative to connect graduates that need jobs with businesses that need their skills.

Intel understands how important these partnerships can be, recognizing that their company's success depends on a pipeline of skilled people ready to fill high-wage, high-tech jobs. Intel often pays for workers to continue their education at nearby Portland State University. As a result, 1 out of every 15 of Intel's Oregon employees has a degree from Portland State.

In fact, Intel's commitment to education begins at an even younger age. The company is providing training to help a hundred thousand math and science teachers improve their skills in the classroom. And today I'm also meeting a few students from Oregon who impressed the judges in the high school science and engineering competitions that Intel sponsors across America.

One young woman, Laurie Rumker, conducted a chemistry experiment to investigate ways to protect our water from pollution. Another student, named Yushi Wang, applied the principles of quantum physics to design a faster computer chip. We're talking about high school students.

So these have been a tough few years for our country, and in tough times, it's natural to question what the future holds. But when you meet young people like Laurie and Yushi, it's hard not to be inspired. And it's impossible not to be confident about America.

We're poised to lead in this new century, and not just because of the good work that large companies like Intel are doing. Across America, there are innovators and entrepreneurs who are trying to start the next Intel or just get a small business of their own off the ground. I'll be meeting with some of these men and women next week in Cleveland to get ideas about what we can do to help their companies grow and create jobs.

The truth is, we have everything we need to compete: bold entrepreneurs, bright new ideas, and world-class colleges and universities. Most of all, we have young people just brimming with promise and ready to help us succeed. All we have to do is tap that potential. That's the lesson on display here at Intel, and that's how America will win the future.

Thanks so much.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:05 a.m. on February 18 at Intel Corp. in Hillsboro, OR, for broadcast on February 19. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 18, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 19.

Remarks at the Opening Session of the Winning the Future Forum on Small Business in Cleveland, Ohio

February 22, 2011

Thank you very much. Please, everybody have a seat. It is wonderful to be here, and I just want to say thank you for our hosts at KSU for—or CSU, rather, excuse me, the—for their

hospitality. This is the second time I've had a chance to be here and always enjoy interacting both with the team here as well as the surrounding community.

I want to make some quick introductions because we've got some special guests. Our SBA Administrator, Karen Mills, is here—there she is. Members of my Cabinet: Secretary of the Treasury Tim Geithner, Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke, Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis, Secretary of Energy Steve Chu. We have Mr. Austan Goolsbee, who's our Chairman of the Economic Council. And my Director of the National Economic Council, Gene Sperling, is here as well.

And I want to say a special thank you to Steve Case, who is not only an extraordinary entrepreneur and business leader, but is also—has agreed to chair the Startup America Partnership, which is a public-private partnership to help move the entrepreneurship agenda forward. So thank you so much, Steve, for your presence here today.

It is wonderful to be back in Ohio, and we're going to do something a little different today. I did not come to Cleveland to talk. Instead, I came here to listen. I've spent the last month since the State of the Union sharing my vision for an America that remains the best place on Earth to do business, an America that competes aggressively for every job and every industry that's out there, an America that wins the future.

Part of that means making sure that government lives within its means, just like you do. And that's why I've designed a budget that freezes spending for 5 years and will help reduce the deficit by $400 billion over the next decade to the lowest level since Dwight Eisenhower was President. Because by cutting back on what we don't need, we can invest in the future. We can invest in the things that are critical to our long-term success: in innovation, so that America stays on the cutting edge; in education, so businesses have access to the skilled workers that they need; in upgrading our transportation and information networks, so companies can move goods and services quickly and cheaply.

So winning the future involves outeducating, outinnovating, outbuilding, outhustling everybody else. And it's entrepreneurs like you who will help America do just that.

Obviously, the big companies generally get most of the attention in our economy, and the success of large companies is critical to the success of medium and small businesses as well. But it's small businesses like yours that help drive America's economic growth and create two out of every three new jobs.

You're the anchors of our Main Streets, small businesses built by folks who live and work in the community and look out for one another that end up determining success or failure of cities and towns. They're the cornerstones of America's promise, the idea that if you've got a dream and you've got the work ethic to see it through, you can succeed. And when our small businesses do well, then America does well.

That's why we convened this Winning the Future Forum for Small Business. Along with Cleveland State and local organizations like JumpStart and NorTech, we looked for entrepreneurs, here in northeast Ohio, who live to outhustle, to outinnovate everybody else in manufacturing and construction, in clean energy and biotech, in retail, in restaurants, including the owners of Bubba's BBQ, who I imagine will be one of the more popular participants today.

We're here to hear from you directly. We want your stories: your successes, your failures, what barriers you're seeing out there to expand, what you've learned along the way. What would make it easier for you to grow? What would make it easier for you to create new jobs? How can America help you succeed so that you can help America succeed?

So we've pulled together five panels for discussion that will be moderated by various members of my administration: panels on inspiring entrepreneurship, on accessing capital, on training workers with the new skills they need for the job, on accelerating a clean energy economy, and on growing our exports so that the rest of the world buys the products that we make here in the United States of America. And we'll have a special sixth session, where I'll

join Austan Goolsbee, the Chairman of my Council of Economic Advisers, as he takes questions and suggestions from Americans live on whitehouse.gov and on Facebook.

So I'm going to be sitting in on some of the other panels to make sure that my staff is doing their work. And then we're going to come back here, and I'll try to sum up what I've heard.

So again, I am very grateful for all of you being here. This is a working session, not a photo op, so I expect all of you will express your opinions clearly. You won't hold anything back. And I'm looking forward to hearing from you and then trying to make sure that we're a good partner in helping you implement the great ideas that you have.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. at Cleveland State University. In his remarks, he referred to J. Albert "Bubba" and Sabrina Baker, founders and owners, Bubba's Q Bar-B-Q and Catering.

Remarks in a Discussion at the Entrepreneur Session of the Winning the Future Forum on Small Business in Cleveland
February 22, 2011

Small Business Administration Administrator Karen G. Mills. So, Mr. President, we were just talking about you and how much you love doing this and how much you enjoy hearing from the small businesses. And raise your hand. Who is a small business in here?

The President. There you go.

Administrator Mills. Okay, there you go. And I thought you might want to meet Al from Bubba's BBQ.

The President. I just gave you a plug. [*Laughter*]

Administrator Mills. He says he's still shaking, you know.

The President. Where are the samples? [*Laughter*]

J. Albert "Bubba" Baker. Well, I brought pictures, but——

The President. Pictures? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Baker. Mr. President, I spent 13 years in the NFL, and I've never been shaken until today. [*Laughter*]

Administrator Mills. There you go.

The President. Well, the—listen, everybody, welcome. And it's great to see you. As I just mentioned when we were all together, the goal here really is to hear from you. And I just want to emphasize in this panel the whole issue of entrepreneurship and why it's so important.

The truth is, is that large companies are critically important to our economy: They export, they employ thousands of people, and they also provide contracts to small businesses. So there's a little bit of an artificial separation sometimes. If large businesses are doing well, then small businesses also have an opportunity for great success.

But here's the unique thing about small businesses. Small businesses that grow into medium-sized and large businesses, that's the key to the future, because it's the new products, it's the new services, things that nobody else thought of before that are going to help absorb all the talented Americans out there who are looking for careers. And the large companies, there's only going to be so much additional employment that they add, partly because they're getting more and more efficient.

So what we want to figure out is how can we help you succeed. Now, many of you are already succeeding, so you can help us understand what it takes to help others succeed. The most important ingredients obviously are your work ethic, your—you initially have an idea, you're willing to take risks, you're willing to try to talk your family into going along with it, you're willing to hustle and scrape to get the financing, to market, to expand sales. We understand that you are the most important ingredient to success.

But there are a number of things that continually come up when it comes to what we're hearing in small businesses: problems with access to capital; problems with being able to connect with consumers and markets when you don't have a lot—a big infrastructure and a lot of capital that you can expend; problems in terms of finding the right employees.

So the goal here is to really get a sense of what you think are the things that we could be most helpful in ensuring your success and the success of other small businesses in the future.

And as I said, we're very lucky to have Steve Case here, who is somebody who grew a small business to a large business and was at the cutting edge of the technological revolution that we've seen over the last 20 years that has changed everything. And he is going to be working as our chairman for public-private partnership that tries to continue to encourage additional entrepreneurship.

So with that, I'm just going to spend most of my time listening. I will turn it over to you, Karen or Steve or others.

Administrator Mills. Well, we have a few small businesses, and I want to just ask Philip, maybe he'll—I'm going to cold-call a few people—makes the smallest microwave oven in the world.

The President. Is that right?

Administrator Mills. So you think we can't make microwaves here. That's pretty innovative, huh?

The President. How big is it?

Philip B. Davis. It's 0.73 cubic feet, 10.5 inches wide, 10 inches deep, and about a foot high. It has a handle. You can carry it around. People put it on their boats and campers, dorm rooms and bedrooms. And we made microwave technology portable. And that's—in terms of innovation, the Chinese are great at manufacturing, but never before had anyone broken the 1 cubic foot barrier. So I had an idea back in 2004, and in 2007 made my first trip to China, with no money down, convinced them to make the prototype. And then we had a chance to get into the sales in Sharper Image, then last year went on amazon.com, and now we're selling it directly off of our own web site.

The President. That's outstanding.

Mr. Davis. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. So, at this point, how many microwaves are you selling?

Mr. Davis. We've sold—since it's been on the market, we've sold over 5,000.

The President. Outstanding.

Mr. Davis. So we're hoping this year that this will be our breakthrough year. It's been an exciting ride for us. But one of the things that we find challenging is, for example, access to capital, because we have a lot of demand for our product in Europe. We get e-mails all the time from France and Spain and Germany asking for the iWavecube.

Administrator Mills. Export it.

Mr. Davis. Yes, we could export it. But the challenge is, we don't have the capital to make the run because it's a different voltage system. It's 220 versus 120 here. And so we need money in order to grow into the European market, but the European Union is 500 million people, compared to 300 million here in the U.S. So that little bit of capital would help us grow.

And my recommendation to you, Mr. President, would be that if you could figure out a way to change the tax policy so that when people invest in small businesses, perhaps the capital gains on an investment would perhaps be not taxed. Let's say if you put in $10,000 or $20,000, if you doubled your investment, the first $20,000 would be——

The President. Now, I don't want to interrupt you, but that is such a good idea that we actually implemented it last year.

Mr. Davis. Did not hear about it.

The President. You did not hear about it? Karen, do you want to talk a little bit about——

Administrator Mills. Well, in fact, in the set of tax cuts that the President enacted—the 17 tax cuts—I want to make sure you all, when you do your taxes, make sure you ask about the 17 tax cuts, because it's money back in your pocket. One of them is, if you invest in a small business, certain criteria, you don't pay capital gains. You don't pay capital gains.

The President. You see there? Now, this was not a setup. [*Laughter*]

Administrator Mills. No, this was not a setup.

The President. I just want to——

Administrator Mills. I was going to say you did that one already. It was his promise.

The President. No, no, we reduced capital gains to zero for investments in small business.

Mr. Davis. Then that word needs to get out because I think that helps the investor make the decisions of where to allocate his capital. But that's a great step in helping entrepreneurs gain access to capital.

The President. Well, we'll make sure that Karen gets everybody the information. Now, what we're going to do is, I'm sure, distribute information on all these tax credits that are available as part of the follow-up to this conversation. But congratulations on the success.

Mr. Davis. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Administrator Mills. Now, Ariane has a construction company. I like this because it's a woman-led construction company.

Ariane B. Kirkpatrick. I have a company, AKA Construction Management Team. And actually we started off with a franchise, and we actually had the opportunity to—[*inaudible*]—when you became President.

The President. Nice.

Ms. Kirkpatrick. And we did such a good job that we got more jobs, more opportunities. And I was asked if I would be interested in doing a project at the Cleveland Museum of Art, where I took lessons every Saturday. So I was proud to be part of it, but you had to be a union company. Being a minority female, I was scared to make that jump and my affiliations with the organization of President's Council—I talked to many of my mentors in that organization, and I studied it and I prayed on it for approximately about 6, 7 months before I made that leap. And I finally did. And it's actually been the best decision I've made.

I've only been in business for almost 2 years now. I've done it with no capital, no access, just with the pennies and dimes and nickels I have in my pocket. And I've been able to carry a payroll. I've been able to pay my union bills, insurance, everything on time. But I'm stressed because I have no access to capital.

You talked about being a risk taker. I've always been a risk taker, but I never was a smart risk taker. So I've had some credit issues. So I've had some barriers, some personal barriers that I've had to overcome to get to the next level. So those more so are some of my problems, on how do I overcome those personal barriers, being a risk taker—wanting to be an entrepreneur, wanting to be a part of that future and win—how do I win with those barriers that I have.

The President. Good. Well, this access to capital issue is going to, I suspect, keep on coming up. Obviously, one of the key things that we've done—and I'll talk about this in another panel that I'll be joining—is both through the SBA, where we expanded the loan guarantee program, increased the size of loans that could be taken out, and reduced fees. That is providing a lot of capital, particularly at a time when small businesses were getting hammered during this past 2 years of recession.

But through Treasury, we're also doing a range of programs, including, by the way, assisting State governments in their own programs so that they can start providing lending and counseling closer to the ground.

Administrator Mills. We've got some new platforms, our Community Advantage program that's designed exactly for your issue. So I'll talk about that, actually, later in the program.

But I want to get a couple other guys in here. Joe, talk about your——

Joseph Lopez. Mr. President, thank you, and welcome to Cleveland. I'm an entrepreneur. I've had one company since 1989—it's New Era Builders, a general contractor—and started another business called Sierra Metals. We just changed the name to Aster Elements. We're fortunate enough to follow the trend in the country where there's a lot of construction and that was in Las Vegas and that was City Center. And at one time that was 9 billion dollars' worth of construction.

We followed the pendulum, did a lot of work. Now we're back, but we've always been focused in northeast Ohio. My biggest chal-

lenge right now, and I think the challenge for a lot of, also, entrepreneurs, is not the working capital, but when we have contracts that are good contracts with viable entities, whether they're banks or law firms or such like that, we still have to wait the 90 days plus——

The President. To get paid.

Mr. Lopez. ——to get paid. Mr. President, when it costs us, whether it's $30,000 or $50,000 or $100,000 a week in payroll and we're waiting 9 or 10 weeks later to get paid and the margin is so small, we can't grow, although we have the right deliverables and the right skill sets and the right talent to a point that we want to grow the business and have other investors, European investors, that we want to carry their products and to do—go national.

So we have a problem with that, of how to make the working capital regular, always on an incoming basis versus waiting for the 90-day payday. Because the 90-day payday just puts you out for another 4 weeks, and then you have to do it again and again. Those are issues that I think most of the fabricators here or manufacturers or even construction personnel have issues with. That's one problem.

I think the other problem is that being a contractor, we're very successful through the SBA program, through the SBA office here—very successful, and we did very well with that. Some of the issues that I have with that—or, I think, most people—is that same thing: the Government takes their time; you're making payroll, putting your process through the——

The President. Processing for a loan?

Mr. Lopez. Not for the loan, just for——

The President. Or for the contracts?

Mr. Lopez. For the contracts.

The President. So if you've gotten a Government contract——

Mr. Lopez. If you've got a Government contract, sometimes it takes you 60 days to get paid. And we know the Government is good for it. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, let me say this. In a Cabinet meeting that we just recently had, I instructed Karen to work with all of our agencies to make sure that we are cutting back on the amount of time that it takes for vendors to get paid to the Government, at least at the Federal level. So that's where I've got some control.

Steve, maybe you—I don't know, maybe you have some suggestions in terms of in the private sector, obviously, if you're a small company you may be at a disadvantage working with a large company, and their attitude is, if the contract says you got to be paid in 90 days, we're going to hold on to that money until the 90th day. And I don't know whether that's just a discrepancy in bargaining power that makes it hard for small businesses in that situation. But this is something that obviously I've heard. On the Government level we can start doing something about it; in the private sector, Steve, you might have some better ideas on it.

Startup America Partnership Chairman Stephen M. Case. I don't really have better ideas. I think you're right that once it's set up, whatever the precedence, whether it's 60 days or 90 days, it's pretty hard to move, and people generally assume they're not going to pay until they need to, with the exception being to the extent you've really been able to differentiate and people really believe you're an essential part of their value chain. Sometimes there's a little bit more flexibility, but generally, people are trying to hold their money as long as possible.

But I'm really here just to listen and also to celebrate everything you've done. It really—I view entrepreneurs as our great American heroes, who really create the products and services that drive the economy and create the jobs and preserve our national competitiveness. I'm really here more as a cheerleader and a listener to understand your stories and your needs.

Participant. Mr. President, is there a way that you could pledge some of those contracts that are viable, that are solid contracts to get working capital?

Administrator Mills. Absolutely. That's something that we do quite a bit of in bank lending and in SBA lending. So those are some of the avenues that we can talk about in order to make sure there's more working capital. I

hear all the time that working capital for growth is as hard to get as any other kind of capital. And we're doing a very good job right now on real estate lending and on equipment capital, and we're working hard on working capital as well.

One of the things, though—I want to underline what the President said about what he said to everyone in the Cabinet about small-business contracting. He has told all of us around the table that the small-business contracting programs are a real big priority and that we know that gives oxygen into your revenue lines. And we also know that it's good for the agencies because they get the most innovative entrepreneurs working for them. And usually, the CEO is right there at the table helping them out.

So this is something that everybody across the administration under the President's leadership is pushing forward on, and I hope that lots of you work with us at the SBA to get qualified to bid on these contracts, because I—there's going to be a really good positive momentum in Government contracting for small business going forward. And they're going to pay on time.

The President. Anybody else? Jeff?

Jeffrey Wadsworth. I come from a slightly different background, and I have a big organization, but we spin out small companies. We have our own venture fund because we're fortunate enough to have a major invention that created money, and we created a venture fund. We have adults running it because it's hard to run your own fund.

One of the big assets in this country in the investment the Government makes in its national laboratories. Now, I just wanted to let you know, we're working closely with Secretary Chu to try and remove those barriers. This 90-day thing comes up there. We believe the contractors for those laboratories could take that risk and—because we need and we hear constantly from industry that we have to move at the speed of business. And there's a massive investment there that is untapped, in my mind, and that we need to make it easier for businesses to work.

The President. Okay. And Steve Chu is already talking to you about it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. at Cleveland State University. Participating in the discussion were J. Albert "Bubba" Baker, co-founder and co-owner, Bubba's Q Bar-B-Q and Catering; Philip B. Davis, chief executive officer and founder, iCubed International, LLC; Ariane B. Kirkpatrick, owner, AKA Construction Management Team, Inc.; Joseph Lopez, chief executive officer and president, Aster Elements, Inc., and president, New Era Builders, Inc.; and Jeffrey Wadsworth, chief executive officer and president, Battelle Memorial Institute. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Access to Capital and Tax Breaks Session of the Winning the Future Forum on Small Business in Cleveland
February 22, 2011

Well, I'm not going to make any long remarks in the opening, just to say that since Tim and I moved to Washington, I think our biggest priorities have always been to make sure that we stabilized the capital markets and made sure that they're working for businesses large and small.

I think Tim did extraordinary work in our first 2 years to make sure that the capital markets sort of regained some sense of normalcy. But what we're well aware of is that if you're a big company, it's very easy to borrow right now and you can borrow very cheaply. If you're a medium-sized company, you may be doing okay. If you're a small business, capital is still tough, partly, as I understand it, because one of the key ways that small businesses were able to get loans was because it had some sort of assets that they could offer up as collateral. And if those asset values have declined, that makes

it that much more difficult. And small community banks that were the source of a lot of lending for small businesses are still working their way through some problems. Many of them were involved in the real estate market one way or another, and that creates difficulties as well.

So we know we still have some challenges. I assume that Tim has already described to you what we're doing both on the SBA side and at Treasury to try to loosen up capital for entrepreneurs and businesspeople like yourselves. But with that, we're interested in finding out in more detail where you think we can be most helpful.

With that, Tim?

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:36 p.m. at Cleveland State University. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Discussion at the New Media Session of the Winning the Future Forum on Small Business in Cleveland
February 22, 2011

The President. Hi, guys.

White House Director of Online Engagement Sarah Bernard. Hello!

The President. I thought I'd join you here.

Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Austan D. Goolsbee. The President.

The President. I'm sorry, did I interrupt an answer?

Director Bernard. Nope. [*Laughter*] Thanks for joining.

The President. You bet.

Chairman Goolsbee. Okay.

The President. All right.

Chairman Goolsbee. The President of the United States is here. Why don't you tell us why you're here.

The President. Well, Cleveland, I think, is a great example of cities all across the country, but especially in the Midwest, who are starting to reinvent themselves. These are typically manufacturing cities. They were built on the auto industry, on heavy manufacturing, steel. And as manufacturing has become much more productive, fewer workers are in manufacturing—even though manufacturing continues to contribute a lot to the economy—and so these regions are having to think, what's going to be the businesses of the future that end up employing more people and providing more opportunity? And small businesses are going to be the ones that I think are going to be making the biggest impact on regions like this one—a lot of risk takers, a lot of entrepreneurs here.

And what we wanted to do is make sure that we listen to small businesses, hear from them, find out what kinds of barriers they're meeting, whether it's capital or finding the right workforce or how do they partner with larger companies. And so far we've already gotten some terrific ideas.

Chairman Goolsbee. He's better at this than we are. [*Laughter*]

The President. No.

Chairman Goolsbee. We got some questions for you from whitehouse.gov——

The President. All right.

Chairman Goolsbee. ——that we were going to shoot to you. James Pepitone in Addison, Texas: "With the virtual death of local banking, it's next to impossible today to get bank loans for anything other than fixed assets. For working capital, speculative funding, for others, entrepreneurs must look to saved capital, family, friends, or even a first customer. Traditional financing sources only help the more traditional forms of business. Innovators must look elsewhere." There were a lot in this spirit, and we were wondering what your view is.

The President. Well, one of the things we hear most frequently from small businesses is the problem of startup capital. Obviously, a lot of small businesses do get started with the entrepreneur's savings, family loans, credit cards.

But over the last 2 years, it's been especially tough for small businesses because of the credit crunch, both in the banking industry as well as the fact that folks don't have home equity loans that they could use potentially to start a business, their credit cards might have been maxed out.

And so what we did over the last 2 years was try to make sure that the Small Business Administration, the SBA, filled some of this hole. We increased the guarantees that SBAs will provide to banks if they loaned—if they made a loan to a small business. We eliminated some of the fees that might be required. And as a consequence, volume from the Small Business Administration went up substantially.

The other thing that we did was we increased the limits on the loans that might be provided through the SBA. So the SBA has done a lot of good work. The Treasury Department has also tried to make sure that they set up funds that would help to facilitate lending to small businesses. That's especially important in part because small businesses, a lot of times, have trouble getting loans when their collateral has gone down, their—the value of their holdings have gone down. And typically, that's been real estate for a lot of small businesses.

So we've got a range of products that, through the SBA, through Treasury, are providing loans to small businesses, helping encourage small banks to get back into the business of lending again. But we heard some good ideas here today about, for example, providing tax credits for angel investors that—right now there have been some discussions in Congress about setting up some additional legislation that could help small businesses, and we're going to see if we can implement it.

Director Bernard. We had a lot of questions come in about—or comments and thoughts about the—preparing the next-generation workforce. Roy Paulson in Temecula, California, noted: "The economy develops in pockets and clusters. Why don't we match this with our workforce development for the best results? We all know that people have many different jobs over their lifetime, and we need to retrain where and when it's needed: keep it simple, apply it quickly, keep it local. The local aspect allows easy access for the people that need the training, and it's tailored to the local environment and conditions."

The President. Well, the answer is in the question. I think that question is spot on. What you find as you travel around the country is, is that there's certain regions that are starting to gain expertise in biotech or they're starting to gain expertise in advanced battery manufacturing or they're starting to gain expertise in a particular industry which requires a particular skill set. And if we can get businesses to partner with local community colleges or local universities and have them help to design the training process for the jobs that already exist, it's a win-win.

For the businesses, it's—means that all their workforce training costs are absorbed somewhere else, which is obviously good for their bottom line.

For the students, what it means is that if you actually go through this program, you know that there's going to be a job at the end of the day because the employers have actually helped to design the program. And so Skills for America's Future is a program that we've been trying to implement that gets those partnerships between businesses and colleges and universities.

The local community college is a particular asset that has been underutilized over the last several years that we want to really ramp up. The Department of Labor is also working with State and local governments so that they can design and tailor their own particular approach to training.

But the key here is to recognize that for the vast majority of folks out there, you're not going to have one job or two jobs during the course of your career, you're probably going to have six or seven different jobs. And even mid-career, you may have to start retraining.

And what we want to make sure of is, A, that there's financing out there for you to retrain, which is why we increased access to student loans, eliminating some of the unwarranted subsidies that went to banks so that we could expand the Pell grant program; make sure that

starting in 2014, if you take out student loans, that in repaying them you'll never have to pay more than 10 percent of your income. So we've expanded access to universities and colleges.

But we also want to make sure that you're being trained for the right stuff. And that's particularly true for your second career, for older students. They've got a family, they may be working—they can't afford to go to school, take out loans, and then it turns out that what they were getting trained for didn't provide an immediate job opportunity.

Director Bernard. Helpful. I don't know how your time is. Do you have time for——

Chairman Goolsbee. He's the President of the United States.

Director Bernard. ——another thought? [*Laughter*]

The President. I'll——

Director Bernard. I think you've got to go.

The President. ——I'll take one.

Chairman Goolsbee. You got one online?

The President. I'll take one more question if you got it.

Director Bernard. This is really putting me on the spot. Let's see what's just come in.

Chairman Goolsbee. Some of them we have to clean up.

Director Bernard. Yes, we have a lot of comments about a lot of things coming in.

The President. Generally speaking, though, the—what I'll do is just talk about what I've heard in some of these forums.

Director Bernard. That's great.

The President. In addition to financing, I think the other thing that people really wanted to find out is how can they get mentored and partner with some larger businesses. And we're very lucky; we've got Steve Case here, who obviously used to be with AOL. Now, he's has agreed to be the chairman of our, sort of, umbrella organization that is Startup America, which is going to help to mentor and partner with would-be entrepreneurs, get them with more mature businesses, medium-sized businesses, large businesses.

Because a lot of times what they need is financing, but sometimes, what they need is mentoring, networking. They need to—if you're in the high-tech space, the most important thing for you is to potentially get in front of a Steve Case or a Steve Jobs or a Mark Zuckerberg or others and get a sense of what it is that is happening in your industry, who are the players there. And so that's another opportunity through a public-private partnership—doesn't cost money, but it can potentially provide opportunities.

Chairman Goolsbee. And we did hear from a number of people who, they're in a later part of their career, and they said, look, we still want to be productive. Can we—how can we help out? How can we teach the next generation? That seems it fits with your theme there.

The President. Absolutely.

So bottom line is that small businesses create two out of every three jobs in America. We're here in Cleveland to make sure that we're highlighting all the tools that are available right now to increase opportunities for small businesses: tax credits if you're providing health care to your workers, tax credits if you're interested in investing in a small business. Right now you get zero capital gains on those investments.

There are a whole range of tools that we're trying to bring to bear to make sure that we continue to be the most dynamic economy in the world. And I'm sure that Austan and Sarah will be interested, monitoring our web site to get even better ideas as time comes up, and let's make sure people know what the web site is. It is——

Director Bernard. Whitehouse.gov.

The President. Whitehouse.gov.

All right. Thank you, guys.

Director Bernard. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:33 p.m. at Cleveland State University. In his remarks, he referred to Steven P. Jobs, cofounder and chief executive officer, Apple Inc.; and Mark E. Zuckerberg, founder and chief executive officer, Facebook, Inc.

Remarks at the Closing Session of the Winning the Future Forum on Small Business in Cleveland
February 22, 2011

Thank you. Please, everybody have a seat. Well, we just completed a wonderful session with many of you, and let me thank you again for your participation.

I want to acknowledge a couple of people I didn't have a chance to mention at the front end. First of all, the mayor of Cleveland, Frank Johnson—Frank Jackson is here. Please give him a big round of applause. And a wonderful Member of Congress, Marcia Fudge is in the house. Where's Marcia? She was here, as well as a great Member of Congress Steve LaTourette. Where's Steve? Is Steve here? All right.

Now, as I may have mentioned, I've been here before. This is the third time I've visited Cleveland State University. And every time I come back here, I get more and more excited about what's happening. Each time I come here, you've done more to retool and reinvent yourself. And that's something that the entire city is doing right now. It's reinventing itself.

During one of the sessions, somebody asked, why come to Cleveland? And I said, not only are big things happening here, but they're emblematic of what's happening all across the Midwest and all across the country. This is a city that was founded on manufacturing, like a lot of cities in the Midwest. And as the economy changed, a lot of people wrote off Cleveland as a shell of its former self. But you, all of you in the audience, you knew differently. You've been working to reinvent the Rust Belt as the Tech Belt. So you've got fiber optics cables that now run beneath Cleveland's streets, like the railroads and highways of the 21st century, drawing new businesses to open their doors downtown. Your universities, your hospitals, entrepreneurs, businesses have all teamed up to get biotechnology and clean energy from imagination to reality, and as a consequence, you've made Cleveland an emerging global leader in both fields.

You're positioning yourselves to attract the jobs, the businesses, and the industries of tomorrow. And that's what I've been spending the past few months talking about, how America is going to win the future. How are we going to reinvent ourselves?

We're still an outstanding manufacturer. One of the things that I think there's a misconception about—and I mentioned this during one of the sessions—is that somehow our manufacturing days are past. That's not true. We're still one of the dominant manufacturers in the world. The challenge, the difference is, is that what used to take a thousand people to manufacture might now take 100 or 10 because of increases in productivity.

And so it's not good enough just to rely on the old industries. We've also got to invent new ones, and that's what you're doing here. Over the last several months, I've visited with organizations like the Chamber of Commerce. I've traveled to large companies. Just recently, I went to Intel because it's doubling down on America, it's investing in new plants and equipment and amazing facilities. And those large companies, those large institutions are important to our success. But the truth is, when it comes to our economy, it's our small businesses that pack the biggest punch, especially when it comes to employment, which is obviously one of the biggest challenges that we faced coming out of this great recession that we had.

Entrepreneurs like each of the ones who are here today create two out of every three new jobs in this country, so you're the cornerstones of the community. You're the sources of pride for working families. When the bet concerns America, you've always gone all in. You've taken risks on behalf of America.

And that's why we convened this Winning the Future Forum on Small Businesses, to hear from you, to gain your counsel, to talk about how America can help you succeed so that you can keep helping America succeed.

Now, for those who just joined us, we've spent the day in breakout sessions talking about five areas of obstacle and opportunity for America's small businesses: entrepreneurship,

how you convert your ideas into companies; capital and how we can increase it so that you have access to capital, to develop those ideas; workforce development, so we can make sure America has the best trained workers in the world and that that's done locally and tailored for the businesses of tomorrow; exports and the obstacles you face to selling your goods and services around the world; and finally, clean energy and what opportunities you see in a 21st-century clean energy economy.

We had a terrific discussion. The groups that I participated in were remarkable and had great ideas. I know the members of the Cabinet had fun, which is why we're going to do it again. And over the next several months, what we're going to be doing is teaming up with mayors and Governors and small-business owners to host a series of these jobs forums across the country.

And as Steve Case, a successful entrepreneur several times over, came and participated in our discussion on fostering entrepreneurship, I'm pleased to announce that he's agreed to join my jobs council as we work to create jobs and grow the economy and keep America moving forward.

I should mention just a couple of things that we heard during some of these breakout sessions. Obviously, there was a lot of emphasis on capital. And we talked about the SBA programs, the Treasury programs that are in place some people may not be aware of that are making a huge difference in providing financing to a lot of startups and a lot of small businesses across the country.

But we also heard from you about some important ideas. For example, right now we're already giving a tax break, zero percent on capital gains for investors who invest in small businesses. But a few of you said that that works well. What we could also really use is some tax credits for angel investors, because that early financing oftentimes may be what makes or breaks a company.

We talked about the fact that people were encouraged by the investments we're making in clean energy. But one of the most important things we heard could be done—and this is something that Steve is going to be taking up with his Startup America—is creating networking opportunities in particular fields and in particular clusters, because oftentimes it's the contacts that you make in that networking process that may open up job opportunities. And you know what? That doesn't cost the U.S. Treasury anything to set up but may make all the difference in terms of success.

When it comes to workforce development, one of the most important things that we've all learned is how important it is to get businesses in early with the universities and the community colleges—a hugely underutilized resource—to develop the actual training program so that young people have confidence if they go through this training program, they've got a job; businesses have confidence that if they hire these young people who went through the training program, they are trained for those jobs.

And one of the things that we really enjoyed hearing about was the local efforts of organizations like JumpStart and NorTech, as well as institutions like Cleveland State, in helping to pull all these various elements together. And that's part of the reason we were able to identify some of the most innovative business men and women in northeast Ohio.

For those of you who aren't aware, JumpStart has worked to help more than 3,000 local businesses lift off and pull together the resources required to keep them aloft in what they call an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

NorTech is building regional innovation clusters, small-business incubators made up of universities and suppliers and manufacturers and more, basically a self-contained supply chain that covers everything from attracting that initial capital to shipping that final product. And these—this cluster concept is so important. We're all familiar with clusters like Silicon Valley. When you get a group of people together and industries together and institutions like universities together around particular industries, then the synergies that develop from all those different facets coming together can make the whole the greater than the sum of its parts.

Right here at Cleveland State, you've got a dedicated office that works to help move your research and discoveries from your local labs to your local businesses, and that's making you a local economic development engine that taps into one of America's greatest assets, and that's our entrepreneurial spirit.

And recently, we started a new series on the White House web site in which my advisers ask for advice from the public, and we gave it a catchy name called Advise the Advisers. And last week, we asked business owners like you to advise us on what drives you, what helps you, but also what holds you back. What are the barriers you're experiencing that we might be able to help knock down?

So we want to hear about your successes and your failures and what you learned along the way. So business men and women from across the country weighed in. And I know that my staff read every single submission because I told them to read every single submission. [*Laughter*]

And one woman in Columbus summed up the entrepreneurial spirit pretty well. She said: "As young as 8 years old, I can remember having business ideas, and I was one of those go-getters out there with a lemonade stand and babysitter clubs and worked as a tutor. I am truly an entrepreneur at heart. It's not easy to give up a good job for the unknown, but I realize that's what must be done in order to realize my dreams."

And so many of you have had that same feeling. You're willing to take the risk to realize your dreams, and through that you realize America's dreams.

That's not easy, to jump into the unknown. But each of the business owners here today has done it, whether they're in advanced biotechnology or just making really good barbecue. [*Laughter*]

Just a couple examples of folks who are here: Dr. Albert Green, the CEO of Kent Displays. Is Albert here? Where is he? There he is—Doc. His company is a product of one of NorTech's clusters, the FlexMatters cluster, and that cluster is working to make Cleveland the global epicenter for the development and manufacturing of flexible electronics: the printing of electronic devices on materials that can bend and flex, like clothing and tablets and medical implants. And we gave them a boost with a contract from the Small Business Administration so they can counsel the small businesses that spring from this cluster on things like patents and exporting, and getting these revolutionary products to market faster.

Kent State University is an integral part of the FlexMatters cluster. And one of the first spinoffs from their Liquid Crystal Institute was Albert's company. Kent Displays researches, develops, and manufactures flexible liquid crystal displays from a state-of-the-art production line in Kent, and it's the first of its kind in the world. So Dr. Green says, "We're turning the tables, manufacturing a high-tech product right here in Ohio and selling it in the United States and selling it abroad." So he almost doubled his staff last year and wants to keep his manufacturing base right here in Ohio. But to keep up with global competition, he's got to be able to invest in new technology, and he's got to draw on a highly skilled local workforce, and he's got to sell his products around the world easily. So he participated today in the exports session today with Gary Locke, our Secretary of Commerce, and he also joined a trade mission to India. And everywhere they went people were asking: Are your products made in America? The world wants American goods. And my administration is going to go to bat for America's businesses around the world. You should know that.

And we've also got—Norma Byron is here. Where's Norma? There you are, Norma. Good to see you. Norma is CEO of Ashlawn Energy up in Painesville, and it's a company that provides multimegawatt energy storage solutions using—and I have no idea what this is—vanadium redox fuel cells. [*Laughter*] That's one of the coolest things I've ever said out loud. [*Laughter*] So with the help of an award from the Department of Energy's Smart Grid Program, Ashlawn is poised to manufacture a next-generation energy storage system in Painesville that will improve efficiency. It will help families and businesses cut down on energy waste,

save money, and reduce dangerous carbon pollution. And they're also retraining local workers with the skills necessary to manufacture new components.

Now, not everything has to be high-tech. So in 1923, the Miceli family began making fine Italian cheeses right here in Cleveland. And Joe Miceli, where are you? There he is back there, the CEO of Miceli Dairy Products. Last month, Joe received a $5.5 million loan from the SBA's 504 program, which helps small businesses expand and upgrade their equipment. And it's allowing Joe to break ground this summer on an expansion of their operation off Buckeye Road. Is that right, Joe? So that expansion won't just add 60 workers, it's going to double the output of ricotta cheese—[*laughter*]—making this one of the tastiest investments the Government has ever made. [*Laughter*] And the second phase of expansion will include a new mozzarella and provolone factory. So I want samples. [*Laughter*]

So you guys are leading the way, and we know there are some things Government can do to help clear the way for your success. We can make sure America remains the best place on Earth to do business by knocking down barriers that stand in the way of your growth. That's why we passed 17 different tax cuts for small businesses, why I proposed lowering the corporate tax rate and eliminating unnecessary regulations to help larger businesses create jobs.

We actually talked about this in one of the sessions. We've also got to get our fiscal house in order, and that's why I've put forth a budget that includes a 5-year spending freeze that will help reduce the deficit by $400 billion and will get annual domestic spending down to the lowest levels since Dwight Eisenhower. I want to work with Democrats and Republicans to make even bigger dents in our deficits, find new savings, cut excessive spending wherever it exists.

At the same time, we can't sacrifice investments in our future. I was just with a group of young people, and one young man who is in the sciences pointed out that he's concerned that his professors are having more and more trouble getting grants because our R&D budgets in this country had been declining as a relative share to GDP. We've decided we've got to increase that back up. And that's part of our budget, investing in innovation.

To facilitate your success, we've got to invest in cutting-edge research and technology. We've also got to invest in the skills and training of our workers. And we've got to invest in the next transportation and communications networks that move goods and information as fast as possible, because if we don't, tomorrow's businesses won't take root here and you'll have a harder time competing with the rest of the world.

So if we want to win the future, we're going to have to outinnovate, outeducate, outbuild, and yes, we are going to have to outhustle the rest of the world. And it's stories like yours and it's places like Cleveland that make me absolutely confident that we're going to be able to do that.

As I said, it's not always easy to project into the future. Sometimes, the unknown is scary. But that hasn't stopped any of you. And it hasn't stopped America. We've never taken the easy route. We've always done what's hard. We've been willing to take risks to do big things. And we also get each other's backs, just like you're doing here in Cleveland, because we know that when it comes to America's success, there's no room for division between business and labor, and Democrats and Republicans. When it comes to competing for jobs and industries, we are on one team, and that is the American team. We will rise and fall together. I absolutely believe that. And if we keep that in mind, there's nothing we can't do.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. at Cleveland State University. In his remarks, he referred to Stephen M. Case, chairman, Startup America Partnership.

Statement on the Earthquake in New Zealand
February 22, 2011

On behalf of the American people, Michelle and I extend our deepest condolences to the people of New Zealand and to the families and friends of the victims in Christchurch, which has suffered its second major earthquake in just 6 months. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those whose lives have been touched by this tragedy, especially as they search for their loved ones and work to recover from this disaster. The United States is a close friend and partner of New Zealand, as evidenced by the meeting of the U.S.-New Zealand Partnership Forum that was underway in Christchurch when the earthquake struck. To assist in the rescue and recovery efforts, we have agreed to deploy a U.S. Agency for International Development Disaster Assistance Response Team, including an urban search and rescue team, and we stand ready to provide more assistance as needed. As our New Zealand friends move forward, may they find some comfort and strength in knowing that they will have the enduring friendship and support of many partners around the world, including the United States.

Statement on the Election of Rahm I. Emanuel as Mayor of Chicago, Illinois
February 22, 2011

I want to extend my congratulations to Rahm Emanuel on a well-deserved victory tonight. As a Chicagoan and a friend, I couldn't be prouder. Rahm will be a terrific mayor for all the people of Chicago.

Remarks on the Situation in Libya
February 23, 2011

Good afternoon, everybody. Secretary Clinton and I just concluded a meeting that focused on the ongoing situation in Libya. Over the last few days, my national security team has been working around the clock to monitor the situation there and to coordinate with our international partners about a way forward.

First, we are doing everything we can to protect American citizens. That is my highest priority. In Libya, we've urged our people to leave the country and the State Department is assisting those in need of support. Meanwhile, I think all Americans should give thanks to the heroic work that's being done by our Foreign Service officers and the men and women serving in our Embassies and consulates around the world. They represent the very best of our country and its values.

Now, throughout this period of unrest and upheaval across the region, the United States has maintained a set of core principles which guide our approach. These principles apply to the situation in Libya. As I said last week, we strongly condemn the use of violence in Libya.

The American people extend our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of all who've been killed and injured. The suffering and bloodshed is outrageous, and it is unacceptable. So are threats and orders to shoot peaceful protesters and further punish the people of Libya. These actions violate international norms and every standard of common decency. This violence must stop.

The United States also strongly supports the universal rights of the Libyan people. That includes the rights of peaceful assembly, free speech, and the ability of the Libyan people to determine their own destiny. These are human rights. They are not negotiable. They must be respected in every country. And they cannot be denied through violence or suppression.

In a volatile situation like this one, it is imperative that the nations and peoples of the world speak with one voice, and that has been our focus. Yesterday a unanimous U.N. Security Council sent a clear message that it condemns the violence in Libya, supports accountability for the perpetrators, and stands with the Libyan people.

This same message, by the way, has been delivered by the European Union, the Arab League, the African Union, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and many individual nations. North and south, east and west, voices are being raised together to oppose suppression and support the rights of the Libyan people.

I've also asked my administration to prepare the full range of options that we have to respond to this crisis. This includes those actions we may take and those we will coordinate with our allies and partners, or those that we'll carry out through multilateral institutions.

Like all governments, the Libyan Government has a responsibility to refrain from violence, to allow humanitarian assistance to reach those in need, and to respect the rights of its people. It must be held accountable for its failure to meet those responsibilities and face the cost of continued violations of human rights.

This is not simply a concern of the United States. The entire world is watching, and we will coordinate our assistance and accountability measures with the international community. To that end, Secretary Clinton and I have asked Bill Burns, our Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, to make several stops in Europe and the region to intensify our consultations with allies and partners about the situation in Libya.

I've also asked Secretary Clinton to travel to Geneva on Monday, where a number of foreign ministers will convene for a session of the Human Rights Council. There she'll hold consultations with her counterparts on events throughout the region and continue to ensure that we join with the international community to speak with one voice to the Government and the people of Libya.

And even as we are focused on the urgent situation in Libya, let me just say that our efforts continue to address the events taking place elsewhere, including how the international community can most effectively support the peaceful transition to democracy in both Tunisia and in Egypt.

So let me be clear: The change that is taking place across the region is being driven by the people of the region. This change doesn't represent the work of the United States or any foreign power. It represents the aspirations of people who are seeking a better life.

As one Libyan said, "We just want to be able to live like human beings." We just want to be able to live like human beings—it is the most basic of aspirations that is driving this change. And throughout this time of transition, the United States will continue to stand up for freedom, stand up for justice, and stand up for the dignity of all people.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:07 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House.

Statement on the First Anniversary of the Death of Orlando Zapata Tamayo
February 23, 2011

One year ago today, the selfless and tragic death of Orlando Zapata Tamayo galvanized the world's attention to the ongoing mistreatment of those unjustly held by Cuban authorities for bravely standing up for the rights of the Cuban people.

The attention brought to the plight of Cuba's political prisoners by Zapata's courageous act and by the peaceful protests of *las Damas de Blanco* has helped free a number of his fellow activists through the good offices of the Catholic Church in Cuba. Today I join the Cuban people in marking this anniversary by again calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners in Cuba.

Sadly, the harassment and detention by Cuban authorities of Zapata's mother, Reina Luisa Tamayo, and others across Cuba as they sought to commemorate her son's death underscores how much of his dream remains unfulfilled.

Since taking office, I have reached out to the Cuban people to support their desire to freely determine their future and enjoy liberty and justice. Today and every day, the Cuban people must know that their suffering does not go unnoticed and that the United States remains unwavering in our commitment to defend the inalienable right of the Cuban people to enjoy the freedoms that define the Americas and that are universal to all human beings.

Remarks During a Meeting With the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness

February 24, 2011

Well, I don't want to waste too much time with a big windup. And I know that everybody here has already been busy today doing some terrific work. I just want to, first of all, thank Jeff. And I want to thank all of you for your willingness to participate in our jobs council.

Just in terms of genesis, I think many of you are aware of the fact that 2 years ago we set up a business advisory group to help guide us through a crisis that we hadn't—of the sort that we hadn't seen since the Great Depression—mostly focused on the financial sector, figuring out how we stabilize that, and how we make sure that the credit markets are working, and how we averted a Great Depression.

We have done that. The economy is now growing. In many sectors we're seeing recovery. But the biggest challenge that we're seeing right now is the fact that unemployment is still way too high all across the country. And so what we wanted to do was retool.

It's critical for us to have input from folks who are actually hiring, putting people to work, making payroll, making the products and services that make our economy so powerful. But we want to make sure that we narrowed the focus to think about how do we ensure, A, that we're putting people to work right now, but also how do we lay the foundation for us to win the future over the long term.

This is obviously a theme that I talked about during the State of the Union. It is my belief that we have all the pieces in place for us to make sure that the 21st century is the American century just like the 20th was. But we're going to have to up our game in this newly competitive world. And that means that we've got to outeducate every other country in the world. We're going to have to outinnovate every country in the world. We've got to make sure that we've got the best infrastructure to move people and goods and services throughout the economy.

I want us to be an economy that is not simply buying from other people and borrowing to do it. I want us to be selling to other people and having some other folks owe us some money. And so it is going to be absolutely critical for us during a period of significant fiscal constraint that we create the kind of public-private partnership that makes that happen. And it's going to be very important for us to get ideas from people who've actually—are actually on the ground right now, trying to build your businesses and operate in a extraordinarily competitive world.

So my main purpose here today at this first meeting, I think, is to listen, to get a sense of where all of you think the economy is right now, what kinds of steps we need to be taking. As I talked about during the State of the Union, we want to remove any barriers and any impediments that are preventing you from success and from growth. At the same time, we want to put a challenge to America's businesses that even as we're working with you to streamline regulations, to reform our tax system, to take other steps that have been sitting on the shelf for quite some time—under both Democratic and Republican Presidents—we want to

make sure that we're also putting a little pressure on you guys to figure out how do we make sure that the economy is working for everybody; how do we make sure that every child out there who's willing to work hard is going to be able to succeed; how do we make certain that working families across the country are sharing in growing productivity and that we're not simply creating an economy in which one segment of it is doing very well, but the rest of the folks are out there treading water.

So, Jeff, again, I want to thank you for your extraordinary work. I want to thank all of you for agreeing to participate.

Last point I'll make is that I'm not interested in photo ops, and I'm not interested in more meetings. I've got enough photo ops and enough meetings; I have a surplus of that. So I expect this to be a working group in which we are coming up with some concrete deliverables. I don't think that we have to be trying to hit home runs every time. I think if we hit some singles and doubles, if we find some very specific things that this group can help us on and we can work on together, then we can build on that success, and in the aggregate, over time, this will have really made a difference at a critical juncture in our economy.

So thank you very much. And with that, I'm going to turn it over to you, Jeff.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. in Room 430 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Jeffrey R. Immelt, chairman and chief executive officer, General Electric Co., in his capacity as Chair of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness.

Statement on the Situation in Algeria
February 24, 2011

I commend the Government of Algeria for taking an important step forward today by formally lifting the state of emergency that has been in place in Algeria for 19 years. This is a positive sign that the Government of Algeria is listening to the concerns and responding to the aspirations of its people, and we look forward to additional steps by the Government that enable the Algerian people to fully exercise their universal rights, including freedom of expression, association, and assembly. The United States is committed to continuing our cooperation with the Government of Algeria as it works to represent and meet the needs of all Algerians. We will also continue speaking up for universal freedoms, justice, and the dignity of every human being.

Remarks at PBS's "The Motown Sound: In Performance at the White House"
February 24, 2011

Good evening, everybody. Please have a seat. Tonight we continue one of my favorite traditions here at the White House by celebrating the music that's at the heart of the American story. And as we come to the end of Black History Month, I can't think of a better way to do it than by honoring the legendary sound of Motown.

I want to start by thanking our performers here tonight: Natasha Bedingfield, Sheryl Crow, Jamie Foxx, Gloriana, Nick Jonas, Ledisi, John Legend, Amber Riley, Mark Salling, Seal, Jordin Sparks, Smokey Robinson, and because we weren't sure that was enough, we thought we might throw Stevie Wonder in there. And obviously, we are grateful for all the other Motown legends who are gracing us with their presence. Thank you for being here.

Over the years, this room has hosted some of the most talented musicians in the world, from classical to country. But Motown is different. No one knows exactly when jazz began. Nobody knows who the first person was to sing a freedom song. But we know where Motown

came from. We know it was born in the basement of a house on West Grand Boulevard in the Motor City, Detroit. And we know it started with a man named Berry Gordy, who is here with us tonight. Stand up, Berry.

Now, apparently Berry tried a lot of things before following his heart into music. A high school dropout, he failed as a record store owner, competed as an amateur boxer, finally took a job earning $85 a week on the assembly line at the local Lincoln-Mercury plant. And it was there, watching the bare metal frames transformed into gleaming automobiles, that Berry wondered why he couldn't do the same thing with musicians and help turn new talent into stars.

And before long, he quit his job at the plant, borrowed $800, and set up shop in a little house with a banner across the front that read "Hitsville, U.S.A." His family thought he was delusional. [*Laughter*] But as Berry said, "People thought the Wright Brothers had a stupid idea, so I say, 'Bring on the stupid ideas.'"

As it turned out, Berry could recognize talent and potential better than anybody else in the business. It began with Smokey Robinson, who stopped by the Motown house with a group of friends calling themselves the Miracles, then came one of Smokey's neighbors, a high school senior named Diana Ross, who started out working as a secretary. One of the Miracles brought along his little brother, who invited a 10-year-old blind kid named Stephen Hardaway Judkins to tag along. [*Laughter*] And then there was a group called the Jackson Five, fresh from amateur night at the Apollo, that Gladys Knight told Berry he just had to see.

Pretty soon, the basement studio was turning out hits faster than Detroit was turning out cars. From 1961 to 1971, Motown produced 110 Top 10 hits from artists like Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, the Four Tops, and the Supremes. In the process, Motown's blend of tight lyrics, catchy melodies, and deep soul began to blur the line between music that was considered either Black or White. As Smokey Robinson said: "I recognized the bridges that were crossed, the racial problems and the barriers that we broke down with music. I recognized that because I lived it."

Along the way, songs like "Dancing in the Streets" and "What's Going On" became the soundtrack of the civil rights era. Black artists began soaring to the top of the pop charts for the first time. And at concerts in the South, Motown groups literally brought people together, insisting that the ropes traditionally used to separate Black and White audience members be taken down.

So today, more than 50 years later, that's the Motown legacy. Born at a time of so much struggle, so much strife, it taught us that what unites us will always be stronger than what divides us. And in the decades since, those catchy beats and simple chords have influenced generations of musicians, from Sheryl Crow to the Jonas Brothers.

So to everybody watching, both here and at home, let's take a trip back to that little studio in Detroit and enjoy the unmistakable sound of Motown. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musicians Gladys M. Knight and Stevie Wonder. Portions of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

February 24, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its

declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2011.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 25. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Anniversaries of Kuwait's Independence and Liberation by Coalition Forces

February 25, 2011

On behalf of the people of the United States, I congratulate the Government and people of Kuwait on the 50th anniversary of their independence on February 26. Kuwait is a longstanding friend and partner of the United States, and we thank His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah for his steadfast partnership and friendship.

February 26 is also the 20th anniversary of Kuwait's liberation by U.S.-led coalition forces. On that day, the international community, having rejected outright aggression and acted to reverse it, stood shoulder to shoulder with Kuwait in securing its freedom and sovereignty. I take this opportunity to honor all those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the cause of freedom in that undertaking: Kuwaitis, Americans, and other coalition partners alike. I also wish to reinforce our enduring commitment to the peace and prosperity of the region.

Statement on Sanctions Against Libya

February 25, 2011

The Libyan Government's continued violation of human rights, brutalization of its people, and outrageous threats have rightly drawn the strong and broad condemnation of the international community. By any measure, Muammar al-Qadhafi's Government has violated international norms and common decency and must be held accountable. These sanctions therefore target the Qadhafi Government, while protecting the assets that belong to the people of Libya.

Going forward, the United States will continue to closely coordinate our actions with the international community, including our friends and allies and the United Nations. We will stand steadfastly with the Libyan people in their demand for universal rights and a government that is responsive to their aspirations. Their human dignity cannot be denied.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Executive Order Blocking Property and Prohibiting Certain Transactions Related to Libya
February 25, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that takes steps with respect to the situation in Libya.

I have determined that the actions of Colonel Muammar Qadhafi, his government, and close associates, including extreme measures against the people of Libya, constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. The order declares a national emergency to deal with this threat.

The order blocks the property and interests in property of persons listed in the Annex to the order, who I have determined meet the first or second of the six criteria set forth below. The order also provides criteria for designations of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to be a senior official of the Government of Libya;
- to be a child of Colonel Muammar Qadhafi;
- to be responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, or to have participated in, the commission of human rights abuses related to political repression in Libya;
- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, logistical, or technical support for, or goods or services in support of the activities described above or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;
- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or
- to be a spouse or dependent child of any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

In addition, the order blocks the property and interests in property of the Government of Libya.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA, as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All executive agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

Additionally, the Secretary of State is suspending all existing licenses and other approvals for the export of defense articles and services to Libya.

The order, a copy of which is enclosed, became effective at 8:00 p.m. eastern standard time on February 25, 2011.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Weekly Address
February 26, 2011

Over the last month, I've been traveling the country, talking to Americans about how we can outeducate, outinnovate, and outbuild the rest of the world. Doing that will require a Government that lives within its means and cuts whatever spending we can afford to do without. But it will also require investing in our Nation's future: training and educating our workers; increasing our commitment to research and technology; building new roads and bridges, high-speed rail and high-speed Internet.

In cities and towns throughout America, I've seen the benefits of these investments. The schools and colleges of Oregon are providing Intel, the State's largest private employer, with a steady stream of highly educated workers and engineers. At Parkville Middle School outside of Baltimore, engineering is the most popular subject, thanks to the outstanding teachers who are inspiring students to focus on their math and science skills.

In Wisconsin, a company called Orion is putting hundreds of people to work manufacturing energy-efficient lights in a once-shuttered plant. And in the small community of Marquette, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, widely accessible high-speed internet has allowed students and entrepreneurs to connect to the global economy. In fact, one small business, a third-generation, family-owned clothing shop called Getz's, is now selling their products online, which has helped them to double their workforce and make them one of America's 5,000 fastest growing companies in a recent listing.

Each of these places reminds us that investments in education, innovation, and infrastructure are an essential downpayment on our future. But they also remind us that the only way we can afford these investments is by getting our fiscal house in order. Just like any family, we have to live within our means to make room for the things we absolutely need.

That's why I've called for a freeze on annual domestic spending over the next 5 years, a freeze that would cut the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade, bringing this kind of spending to its lowest share of our economy since Dwight Eisenhower was President. Just to be clear, that's lower than it was under the past three administrations and lower than it was under Ronald Reagan.

Now, putting this budget freeze in place will require tough choices. That's why I've frozen salaries for hard-working civil servants for 3 years and proposed cutting programs I care deeply about, like community action programs in low-income neighborhoods. I'm not taking these steps lightly, but I'm taking them because our economic future demands it.

Still, a freeze in annual domestic spending is just a start. If we're serious about tackling our long-run fiscal challenges, we also need to cut excessive spending wherever we find it, in defense spending, spending in Medicare and Medicaid, and spending through tax breaks and loopholes.

I am willing to consider any serious ideas to help us reduce the deficit, no matter what party is proposing them. But instead of cutting the investments in education and innovation we need to outcompete the rest of the world, we need a balanced approach to deficit reduction. We all need to be willing to sacrifice, but we can't sacrifice our future.

Next week, Congress will focus on a short-term budget. For the sake of our people and our economy, we cannot allow gridlock to prevail. Both Democratic and Republican leaders in the House and Senate have said they believe it's important to keep the Government running while we work together on a plan to reduce our long-term deficit.

Given that, I urge and expect them to find common ground so we can accelerate, not impede, economic growth. It won't be easy. There will be plenty of debates and disagreements, and neither party will get everything it wants. Both sides will have to compromise.

That's what it will take to do what's right for our country. And I look forward to working with members of both parties to produce a

responsible budget that cuts what we can't afford, sharpens America's competitive edge in the world, and helps us win the future.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:55 p.m. on February 25 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on February 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 25, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 26.

Statement on Government Reforms in Bahrain
February 27, 2011

I welcome the announcement by King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa about making important changes to the Cabinet and restating his commitment to reform. The United States supports the national dialogue initiative led by Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa and encourages a process that is meaningful, inclusive, nonsectarian, and responsive to the people of Bahrain. The dialogue offers an opportunity for meaningful reform and for all Bahrainis to forge a more just future together. As a longstanding partner of Bahrain, the United States continues to believe that Bahrain's stability will be enhanced by respecting the universal rights of the people of Bahrain and reforms that meet the aspirations of all Bahrainis.

Remarks at the National Governors Association Dinner
February 27, 2011

Well, good evening, everybody. Welcome to the White House. I want to start by acknowledging your outstanding chair, Christine Gregoire, for her wonderful work, and your vice chair, Dave Heineman, for his wonderful work. Thank you very much.

I want to welcome some of you back, and I want to welcome those who are here for the first time. I know some of you may be confused and think this is the Oscars. [*Laughter*] There are some similarities. First of all, everybody looks spectacular. And the second thing is, if I speak too long, the music will start playing. [*Laughter*] So I'm going to be very brief.

I know that the last couple of years have not been easy in a lot of your States. People have been struggling. Folks have lost jobs. Businesses have shuttered. We went through the toughest recession since the Great Depression. And nobody has felt it more than folks back home, and you see it each and every day. You have to respond in ways that go beyond just ideology or rhetoric.

The thing about Governors is you're in charge and people know where to find you and they expect you to help them during tough times. And many of you over the last 2 years have done extraordinary work. Many of you are expected for the next 2 years, next 4 years, or however long it may be, to do extraordinary work.

The main message I want to deliver tonight, in addition to asking you to have some fun this evening, is to know that you've got a partner here in the White House. If you look around the room, we come from a lot of different parts of the country, and people may have different perspectives, but one thing that we all absolutely share is the belief in the American Dream and the confidence that when our people get opportunities, they've got the ingenuity and the stick-to-it-ness and the drive to succeed.

And our job is to make sure that we are doing everything possible to ensure that each child gets a good education; that somebody who has a great idea is able to start a business

and run with it; that we're looking after our people, including those who are most vulnerable; and that we're going to be bequeathing to the next generation the kind of America that will make us proud and assuring that the 21st century will be the American century just like the 20th century was.

We can't do that by ourselves. There's extraordinary diversity among our States, and that's a great strength. That's why our Federal system is the laboratory for democracy, because in each of your States, you guys are trying all kinds of things. And oftentimes, your best ideas end up percolating up and becoming models and templates for the country.

But we're also one Nation, and our goal has to be to find ways to find common ground and to work together, and I'm confident that we can do that moving forward.

So I want to propose a toast, not only to all the Governors who are here, but also to all their spouses, who put up with life in politics. [*Laughter*] It's not always easy, but I hope your families, given all the sacrifices you're making, feel that it's worth it, because I certainly believe that the work that you're doing each and every day is making an extraordinary contribution to our country.

Thank you very much. Cheers.

[*At this point, the President offered a toast.*]

And with that, I'd like Christine to come up and offer a few words as well.

[*Governor Christine O. Gregoire of Washington made brief remarks, followed by a toast to the President.*]

The President. All right. Let's start dinner, and everybody have fun.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:14 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. David E. Heineman of Nebraska. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Gov. Gregoire.

Remarks to the National Governors Association
February 28, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Please have a seat. Thank you so much. Well, thank you, Joe. Thank you to the members of my Cabinet and my administration who are here. Thank you, Governor Gregoire and Governor Heineman, for your outstanding leadership. And I also want to acknowledge Ray Scheppach—where's Ray? There he is—who's been NGA's executive director for 28 years, and this is his final meeting. So, Ray, thank you for your extraordinary service. Thank you.

So I hope everybody had fun last night. I know that you had a wonderful time listening to Michelle and Jill. Joe's main function is to provide a buffer between me and them so that I don't have to follow them immediately—[*laughter*]—because they are really good and care deeply about what's happening with military families.

I hope today all of you feel free to make yourselves at home. For those of you with a particular interest in the next election, I don't mean that literally. [*Laughter*]

We meet at a moment when all of us—Democrats and Republicans, leaders at the national and the State levels—face some very big challenges. Our country has come through a long and wrenching recession. And as we recover, the question we're going to have to answer is: Where will the new jobs come from, what will the new sources of economic growth be, and how can we make sure that the American Dream remains a reality into the 21st century?

Now, in the short term, we came together here in Washington at the end of last year and enacted tax cuts that are already making Americans' paychecks bigger and are allowing businesses to write off major investments. These are tax cuts and changes in the tax credit system that are going to spur job creation and economic growth. And I'm proud that Democrats and

Republicans worked with each other to get it done.

In the long term, however, we need to address a set of economic challenges that, frankly, the housing bubble largely papered over for almost a decade. We now live in a world that's more connected and more competitive than ever before. When each of you tries to bring new jobs and industries to your State, you're not just competing with each other, but you're competing with China, you're competing with India, you're competing with Brazil, you're competing with countries all around the world.

And that means that we as a nation need to make sure that we are the best place on Earth to do business. We need a skilled and educated workforce, a commitment to cutting-edge research and technology, and a fast and reliable transportation and communications network. That's how we're going to bring new jobs to America, and that's how we're going to win the future.

Making these necessary investments would be hard at any time, but it's that much harder at a time when resources are scarce. After living through a decade of deficits and a historic recession that made them worse, we can't afford to kick the can down the road any longer. So the budget debate that we're having is going to be critical here in Washington. And so far, most of it's been focused almost entirely on how much of annual domestic spending—what in the parlance we call domestic discretionary spending—that we should cut. There's no doubt that cuts in discretionary spending have to be a part of the answer for deficit reduction.

And that's why, as a start, I've proposed a 5-year spending freeze that will reduce our deficits by $400 billion. The budget that I sent to Congress cuts or eliminates more than 200 Federal programs. And it reforms dozens of others, from health care to homeland security to education, so that rather than throwing money at programs with no accountability or measured results, we're committed to funding only those things that work.

All told, the budget cuts I've proposed will bring annual domestic spending to its lowest share of the economy since Dwight Eisenhower. Let me repeat that: Under my budget, if it were to be adopted, domestic discretionary spending would be lower as a percentage of GDP than it was under the nine previous administrations, including under Ronald Reagan's.

But we know that this kind of spending, domestic discretionary spending, which has been the focus of complaints about out-of-control Federal spending, makes up only about 12 percent of the entire budget. If we truly want to get our deficit under control, then we're going to have to cut excessive spending wherever it exists: in defense spending, and I have to say that Bob Gates has been as good a steward of taxpayer dollars when it comes to the Pentagon as just about anybody out there, but we're going to have to do more; in health care spending, on programs like Medicare and Medicaid; and in spending through tax breaks and loopholes. That's going to be a tough conversation to have, but it's one we need to have, and it's one I expect to have with congressional leaders in the weeks to come.

Those of you who are in this room obviously are on the frontlines of this budget debate. As the Recovery Act's funds that saw through many States over the last 2 years are phasing out—and it is undeniable that the Recovery Act helped every single State represented in this room manage your budgets, whether you admit it or not—you face some very tough choices at this point on everything from schools to prisons to pensions.

I also know that many of you are making decisions regarding your public workforces, and I know how difficult that can be. I recently froze the salaries of Federal employees for 2 years. It wasn't something that I wanted to do, but I did it because of the very tough fiscal situation that we're in.

So I believe that everybody should be prepared to give up something in order to solve our budget challenges, and I think most public servants agree with that. Democrats and Republicans agree with that. In fact, many public employees in your respective States have already agreed to cuts.

But let me also say this: I don't think it does anybody any good when public employees are

denigrated or vilified or their rights are infringed upon. We need to attract the best and the brightest to public service. These times demand it. We're not going to attract the best teachers for our kids, for example, if they only make a fraction of what other professionals make. We're not going to convince the bravest Americans to put their lives on the line as police officers or firefighters if we don't properly reward that bravery.

So yes, we need a conversation about pensions and Medicare and Medicaid and other promises that we've made as a nation. And those will be tough conversations, but necessary conservations. As we make these decisions about our budget going forward, though, I believe that everyone should be at the table and that the concept of shared sacrifice should prevail. If all the pain is borne by only one group—whether it's workers or seniors or the poor—while the wealthiest among us get to keep or get more tax breaks, we're not doing the right thing. I think that's something that Democrats and Republicans should be able to agree on.

Now, as we begin to get our budgets under control, the other thing we can't do is sacrifice our future. Even as we cut back on those things that don't add to growth or opportunity for our people, we have to keep investing in those things that are absolutely necessary to America's success: education, innovation, infrastructure.

On education, our approach has been to partner with you to offer more flexibility in exchange for better standards, to lift the cap on charter schools, to spur reform not by imposing it from Washington, but by asking you to come up with some of the best ways for your States to succeed. That was the idea behind Race to the Top: You show us the best plans for reform, we'll show you the money.

We're also working with you and with Congress to fix No Child Left Behind, with a focus on reform, responsibility, and most importantly, results. And we're trying to give States and schools more flexibility to reward good teachers and stop making excuses for bad teachers, because we know that the single most important factor in a child's success other than their parents is the man or woman at the front of the classroom.

And I had a chance to see this recently. I went over to Parkville Middle School in Maryland, where engineering is now the most popular subject, mainly thanks to some outstanding teachers who have inspired students to focus on their math and their science skills. So we know teachers can make a difference, and we want to help you have the very best teachers in the classroom.

We also have to invest in innovation, in American research and technology, in the work of our scientists and engineers, and in sparking the creativity and imagination of our people.

Now, a lot of this obviously is done in the private sector. But as much as the private sector is the principal driver of innovation, it's often hesitant to invest in the unknown, especially when it comes to basic research. Historically, that's been a Federal responsibility. It's how we ended up with things like the computer chip and the GPS. It's how we ended up with the Internet. It's also how a lot of your States are already attracting jobs and industries of the future.

I went to Wisconsin, for example, a few weeks ago, and I visited a small-town company called Orion that's putting hundreds of people to work manufacturing energy-efficient lights in a once-darkened plant. They benefited from Federal research.

In Ohio and Pennsylvania, thanks in part to Federal grants, I saw universities and businesses joining together to make America a world leader in biotechnology and in clean energy. And if you have any doubt about the importance of this Federal investment in research and development, I would suggest that you talk to the cutting-edge businesses in your own State. They will tell you that if we want the next big breakthrough, the next big industry to be an American breakthrough, an American industry, then we can't sacrifice these investments in research and technology.

The third way that we need to invest is in our infrastructure, everything from new roads and bridges to high-speed rail and high-speed

Internet, projects that create hundreds of thousands of private sector jobs. And I know that in some of your States, infrastructure projects have garnered controversy. Sometimes they've gotten caught up in partisan politics.

This hasn't traditionally been a partisan issue. Lincoln laid the rails during the course of a civil war. Eisenhower built the Interstate Highway System. Both parties have always believed that America should have the best of everything. We don't have third-rate airports and third-rate bridges and third-rate highways. That's not who we are. We shouldn't start going down that path.

New companies are going to seek out the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information, whether they're in Chicago or they're in Shanghai. And I want them to be here, in the United States. So to those who say that we can't afford to make investments in infrastructure, I say we can't afford not to make investments in infrastructure. We always have had the best infrastructure. The notion that somehow we'd give up that leadership at this critical juncture in our history makes no sense.

Just ask the folks that I met up in Marquette, Michigan—I was talking to Rick Snyder about this—up in the Upper Peninsula. This is a town of 20,000 people, far away from the hustle and bustle of places like Detroit or Grand Rapids. But because of the wireless infrastructure that they have set up, they've now got—the local department store, third-generation, family-owned department store, has been able to hook up with the university and have access to wireless, and they are now selling two-thirds of their goods online. They're one of the 5,000 fastest-growing companies in America—up in the Upper Peninsula—because the infrastructure was in place to allow them to succeed.

And you've got kids in schoolhouses in even more remote areas who are able to plug in to lectures and science fairs anywhere in America because of the infrastructure that was set up. That's a smart investment for every State to make. And the Federal Government wants to be your partner in making those investments.

These are the kinds of investments that pay huge economic dividends in terms of jobs and growth. They are the fundamentals that allow some States to weather economic storms better than others. They're the fundamentals that will make some States better positioned to win the future than others. These investments are not just critical for your State's success, they're critical for America's success. And I want to be a partner in helping you make that happen.

Which brings me to the final topic that's going to help determine our ability to win the future, and that's getting control of our health care costs. Now, I am aware that I have not convinced everybody here to be a member of the Affordable Care Act fan club. But surely we can agree that for decades, our governments, our families, our businesses watched as health care costs ate up more and more of their bottom line. There's no disputing that. That didn't just happen last year. It didn't just happen 2 years ago. It's been going on for years now.

We also know that the biggest driver of the Federal debt is Medicare costs. Nothing else comes close. We could implement every cut that the House of Representatives right now has proposed, and it would not make a dent in our long-term budget, wouldn't make a dent in our long-term deficits, because of health care costs.

We know it's one of the biggest strains in your State budgets: Medicaid.

And for years, politicians of both parties promised one thing: real reform. Everybody talked about it. Well, we've decided to finally do something about it, to create a structure that would preserve our system of private health insurance; would protect our consumers from the worst abuses of insurance companies; would create competition and lower costs by putting in place new exchanges, run by the States, where Americans could pool together to increase their purchasing power and select from various plans to choose what's best for them, the same way that Members of Congress do, the same way that those who are lucky enough to work for big employers do.

And the fact is that the Affordable Care Act has done more to rein in rising costs, make

sure everyone can buy insurance, and attack the Federal deficit than we've seen in years. And that's not just my opinion; that's the opinion of the Congressional Budget Office—nonpartisan—the same one that puts out numbers that, when it's handy to go after me, people trot out and say, "Boy, these are—look at these numbers." So they're saying we're saving a trillion bucks because of this act on our health care costs. Otherwise, we'd be a trillion dollars more in the red. That's something that we should build on, not break down.

Now, that doesn't mean that the job of health care reform is complete. We still have to implement the law, and we have to implement it in a smart and nonbureaucratic way. I know that many of you have asked for flexibility for your States under this law. In fact, I agree with Mitt Romney, who recently said he's proud of what he accomplished on health care in Massachusetts and supports giving States the power to determine their own health care solutions. He's right. Alabama is not going to have exactly the same needs as Massachusetts or California or North Dakota. We believe in that flexibility.

So right now under the law, under the Affordable Care Act, Massachusetts and Utah already operate exchanges of their own that are very different—operate them in their own way. And we made sure that the law allowed that. The same applies for other requests, like choosing benefit rules that meet the needs of your citizens or allowing for consumer-driven plans and health savings accounts.

And this recognition that States need flexibility to tailor their approach to their unique needs is why part of the law says that beginning in 2017, if you can come up with a better system for your State to provide coverage of the same quality and affordability as the Affordable Care Act, you can take that route instead. That portion of the law has not been remarked on much. It says by 2017, if you have a better way of doing it, help yourself, go ahead, take that route.

Now, some folks have said, "Well, that's not soon enough." So a few weeks ago, Oregon Senator Ron Wyden, a Democrat, and Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown, a Republican, and Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu, they proposed legislation that would accelerate that provision. So it would allow States to apply for such a waiver by 2014 instead of 2017.

I think that's a reasonable proposal. I support it. It will give you flexibility more quickly, while still guaranteeing the American people reform. If your State can create a plan that covers as many people as affordably and comprehensively as the Affordable Care Act does, without increasing the deficit, you can implement that plan. And we'll work with you to do it. I've said before, I don't believe that any single party has a monopoly on good ideas. And I will go to bat for whatever works, no matter who or where it comes from.

I also share your concern about Medicaid costs. I know this has been a topic of significant conversation over the last couple of days. We know that over half of all Medicaid costs come from just 5 percent of enrollees, many of whom are what's called dual eligibles, seniors in Medicare as well as in Medicaid. The Affordable Care Act helps address this by changing the incentives for providers so that they start adopting best practices that will work to reduce costs while improving quality.

But we understand the pressure you're under. We understand that we've got to do more. So today—and I mentioned this to Christine last night—I'm asking you to name a bipartisan group of Governors to work with Secretary Sebelius on ways to lower costs and improve the quality of care for these Americans. And if you can come up with more ways to reduce Medicaid costs, while still providing quality care to those who need it, I will support those proposals as well.

So here's the bottom line. Once fully implemented, I'm convinced the Affordable Care Act will do what it was designed it to do: cut costs, cover everybody, end the worst abuses in the insurance industry, and bring down our long-term deficits. I am not open to refighting the battles of the last 2 years or undoing the progress that we've made. But I am willing to work with anyone—anybody in this room, Democrat or Republican, Governors or Member of Congress—to make this law even better,

to make care even better, to make it more affordable and fix what needs fixing.

You see, part of the genius of our Founders was the establishment of a Federal system in which each of our States serves as a laboratory for our democracy. Through this process, some of the best State ideas became some of America's best ideas. So whether it's through Race to the Top or improving the Affordable Care Act or reforming the way that we approach social programs by ensuring that spending is tied to success, our approach has been to give you the flexibility that you need to find your own innovative ways forward. In fact, this week I'm issuing a Presidential memorandum that instructs all Government agencies to follow this flexible approach wherever the law allows.

But even as we preserve the freedom and diversity that is at the heart of federalism, let's remember that we are one Nation. We are one people. Our economy is national. Our fates are intertwined. Today, we're not competing with each other, we're competing with other countries that are hungry to win new jobs, hungry to win new industries.

I'm confident we will win this competition as long as we're fighting it together. And I know that whatever our differences, you share that goal. So you've got a partner in the White House to make this happen. And I hope that this becomes the start of a productive and serious conversation going forward, one that I want to start by answering some of your questions.

So thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:16 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Christine O. Gregoire of Washington, in her capacity as chair, and Gov. David E. Heineman of Nebraska, in his capacity as vice chair, of the National Governors Association; Gov. Richard D. Snyder of Michigan; and former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden, who introduced the President.

Statement on the Death of Frank W. Buckles
February 28, 2011

Michelle and I were inspired by the service and life story of former Army Corporal Frank W. Buckles, the last surviving American veteran of World War I and the oldest known World War I era veteran in the world, who passed away yesterday at the age of 110. A decorated soldier in the Great War, he also survived more than 3 years in Japanese prisoner of war camps during the Second World War.

Frank Buckles lived the American century. Like so many veterans, he returned home, continued his education, began a career, and along with his late wife Audrey, raised their daughter Susannah. And just as Frank continued to serve America until his passing, as the honorary chairman of the World War I Memorial Foundation, our Nation has a sacred obligation to always serve our veterans and their families as well as they've served us.

We join Susannah and all those who knew and loved her father in celebrating a remarkable life that reminds us of the true meaning of patriotism and our obligations to each other as Americans.

NOTE: The statement referred to Susannah Flanagan, daughter of Mr. Buckles.

Memorandum on Administrative Flexibility, Lower Costs, and Better Results for State, Local, and Tribal Governments

February 28, 2011

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Administrative Flexibility, Lower Costs, and Better Results for State, Local, and Tribal Governments

Over the last 2 years, my Administration has worked with State, local, and tribal governments through the Recovery Act and other means to create jobs, build infrastructure, and protect critical programs and services in the face of declining revenues. But through smarter government we can do even more to improve outcomes and lower costs for the American taxpayer.

Federal program requirements over the past several decades have sometimes been onerous, and they have not always contributed to better outcomes. With input from our State, local, and tribal partners, we can, consistent with law, reduce unnecessary regulatory and administrative burdens and redirect resources to services that are essential to achieving better outcomes at lower cost. This is especially urgent at a time when State, local, and tribal governments face large budget shortfalls and American taxpayers deserve to know that their funds are being spent wisely.

On January 18, 2011, I signed Executive Order 13563, which, among other things, calls for careful analysis of regulations by executive departments and agencies (agencies), including consideration of costs and benefits. Executive Order 13563 also requires retrospective analysis of existing significant rules and greater coordination across agencies to simplify and harmonize redundant, inconsistent, or overlapping requirements, thus reducing costs.

Executive Order 13563 applies to regulations involving and affecting State, local, and tribal governments. In particular, my Administration has heard from these governments that the array of rules and requirements imposed by various Federal programs and agencies may at times undermine their efforts to modernize and integrate program delivery. While appropriate data collection requirements are important to program accountability, some of these requirements are unduly burdensome, may not properly align compliance requirements with outcomes, are not synchronized across programs, and fail to give governments and taxpayers meaningful information about what works and what needs to be improved or be stopped. I believe that working together, State, local, and tribal governments and Federal agencies can distinguish between rules and requirements that support important goals—such as promoting public health and welfare; protecting the rights of individuals, organizations, and private businesses; and assuring that programs produce intended outcomes—from rules and requirements that are excessively burdensome or may not serve their intended purpose.

Through this memorandum, I am instructing agencies to work closely with State, local, and tribal governments to identify administrative, regulatory, and legislative barriers in Federally funded programs that currently prevent States, localities, and tribes, from efficiently using tax dollars to achieve the best results for their constituents.

Section 1. Coordination and Collaboration. To facilitate coordination across Federal agencies and State, local, and tribal governments, I direct the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to lead a process, in consultation with State, local, and tribal governments, and agencies, to: (1) provide input to multiple agencies on State-specific, regional, or multistate strategies for eliminating unnecessary administrative, regulatory, and legislative burdens; (2) enable State, local, and tribal governments to request increased flexibility, as appropriate, from multiple agencies simultaneously and receive expeditious and judicious consideration of those requests; (3) establish consistent criteria, where appropriate, for

evaluating the potential benefits, costs, and programmatic effects of relaxing, simplifying, or eliminating administrative, regulatory, and legislative requirements; and (4) facilitate consensus among State, local, and tribal governments and agencies on matters that require coordinated action.

The Director of the OMB shall also take the following actions:

- Review and where appropriate revise guidance concerning cost principles, burden minimizations, and audits for State, local, and tribal governments in order to eliminate, to the extent permitted by law, unnecessary, unduly burdensome, duplicative, or low-priority recordkeeping requirements and effectively tie such requirements to achievement of outcomes.
- With agencies that administer overlapping programs, collaborate with State, local, and tribal governments to standardize, streamline, and reduce reporting and planning requirements in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act. The OMB should play a lead role, with appropriate agencies, in helping to develop efficient, low-cost mechanisms for collecting and reporting data that can support multiple programs and agencies.
- Facilitate cost-efficient modernization of State, local, and tribal information systems, drawing upon the collaboration of the Chief Information Officer in the OMB and the Chief Technology Officer in the Office of Science and Technology Policy.
- Provide written guidance to agencies on implementation of this memorandum within 60 days of the date of this memorandum.

Sec. 2. Streamlining Agency Requirements. Within 180 days of the date of this memorandum, agencies shall take the following actions to identify regulatory and administrative requirements that can be streamlined, reduced, or eliminated, and to specify where and how increased flexibility could be provided to produce the same or better program outcomes at lower cost.

- Work with State, local, and tribal governments to identify the best opportunities to realize efficiency, promote program integrity, and improve program outcomes, including opportunities, consistent with law, that reduce or streamline duplicative paperwork, reporting, and regulatory burdens and those that more effectively use Federal resources across multiple programs or States. Agencies should invite State, local, and tribal governments to identify not only administrative impediments, but also significant statutory barriers, to efficiency and effectiveness in program implementation.
- Establish preliminary plans to (1) consolidate or streamline processes that State, local, and tribal governments must use to obtain increased flexibility to promote the same or better outcomes at lower cost; (2) establish transparent criteria or principles for granting such increased flexibility, including those that are generally available and those that may be granted conditionally; and (3) ensure continued achievement of program results while allowing for such increased flexibility.
- Identify areas where cross-agency collaboration would further reduce administrative and regulatory barriers and improve outcomes. This should include identifying requirements for State planning documents that are prerequisites for awards from individual Federal programs that could be consolidated into one plan serving a number of agencies and programs.
- Report the results of these actions to the Director of the OMB.

Sec. 3. General Provisions. (a) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of any necessary appropriations.

(b) Nothing in this memorandum shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the

functions of the Director of the OMB relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(c) This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

BARACK OBAMA

Remarks on the Shooting of United States Military Personnel in Frankfurt, Germany, and an Exchange With Reporters
March 2, 2011

The President. I want to take a brief moment just to say a few words about a tragic event that took place earlier today in Frankfurt, Germany.

I'm saddened and I am outraged by this attack that took the lives of two Americans and wounded two others. I think the American people are united in expressing our gratitude for the service of those who were lost. Michelle and I have their family and their friends in our thoughts and prayers, and we are praying for a speedy recovery for those who were injured.

I want everybody to understand that we will spare no effort in learning how this outrageous act took place and in working with German authorities to ensure that all of the perpetrators are brought to justice.

And we don't have all the information yet, and you will be fully briefed as we get more information, but this is a stark reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices that our men and women in uniform are making all around the world to keep us safe and the dangers that they face all around the globe.

So I think it's fair to say that on behalf of the American people, we want to extend our deepest condolences to these families. And we will give you further updates as we get more information about it.

Okay. Thank you.

Situation in Libya

Q. Anything on Libya, Mr. President?

Q. Was this an act of terrorism, sir?

Q. Will you take a question on Libya?

The President. I will have a chance to take some questions tomorrow. President Calderon from Mexico will be here, and so I'll give you guys a chance to ask a couple of questions on some of these other pressing topics. All right?

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House.

Remarks on Presenting the National Medal of Arts and the National Humanities Medal
March 2, 2011

The President. Thank you very much, everyone. Please, have a seat. Thank you. Well, hello, everybody. It is wonderful to have all of you here.

I want to make mention of some folks in particular that have helped us to celebrate the arts and the humanities for many years. First of all, if I'm not mistaken, our Democratic leader in the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, a great champion of the arts, is here. There she is. Thank you, Nancy.

The Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, Rocco Landesman, is here. Where's Rocco? There he is. The Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Jim Leach, is here. The two most powerful

people in the White House, Jill Biden and Michelle Obama, are here. [*Laughter*]

And two recipients who were unable to be here, but who we love, I want to make sure to acknowledge: Meryl Streep and Harper Lee could not be here today, but they will be receiving their awards as well. So please give them a round of applause.

I was just told by my wife that I went off program because originally we were supposed to get everybody seated and I was supposed to then come in and make my formal remarks. And I bulled my way through to go ahead and see the honorees before they came out here to sit down, because these are extraordinary people. One of the great joys of being President is getting a chance to pay tribute to the artists and authors, the poets and performers, who have touched our hearts and opened our minds, or, in the case of Quincy Jones and James Taylor, set the mood. [*Laughter*]

One of the people that we honor today, Joyce Carol Oates, has said, "Ours is the nation, so rare in human history, of self-determination; a theoretical experiment in newness, exploration, discovery." That's what we do.

And for more than two centuries, this experiment has been conducted by revolutionaries and pioneers, by immigrants who braved hardship and inventors who tested new ideas, soldiers who fought for our freedom and ordinary citizens who marched for their rights.

But we are here today because these men and women were not alone in these struggles. With them were the stories that sparked their imaginations, the poetry and the music that inspired their causes, the works of art and literature that spoke to their condition and affirmed their desire for something more.

And I speak personally here because there are people here whose books or poetry or works of history shaped me. I've got these thumb-worn editions of these works of art and these old records where they were still vinyl, Sonny—[*laughter*]—before they went digital, that helped inspire me or get me through a tough day or take risks that I might not otherwise have taken. And I think what's true for me is true for everyone here and true for our country.

The fact is that works of art, literature, works of history, they speak to our condition and they affirm our desire for something more and something better.

It was the writings of Thomas Paine that General Washington ordered his men to read before crossing the Delaware. It was spirituals sung by slaves around a campfire that helped to keep hope alive. We can think of the protest songs that tell the story of the civil rights movement, the photographs from the Great Depression that showed how folks were suffering, but also how they were striving.

Time and again, the tools of change and of progress, of revolution, of ferment, they're not just pickaxes and hammers and screens and software, but they've also been brushes and pens and cameras and guitars.

And the arts and the humanities help us through the hard times and they remind us of what make the good times worthwhile. After all, the goal doesn't always have to be so lofty. Sometimes, we just need a break, a chance to laugh or escape from the moment.

So all of the individuals that we honor today are part of this tradition. We can point to their performances, on stage or on film, that we carry with us forever because we've been so moved. We can think of the novels that have chronicled the American experience, from the streets of Newark to the courts of Alabama. How many young people have come to see the senseless cruelty of racism, and the importance of standing up for what's right, through the eyes of a girl named Scout? How many young people have learned to think by reading the exploits of Portnoy and his complaints? [*Laughter*]

We also remember the art that challenged our assumptions, the scholarship that brought us closer to the events of our history, the poetry that we loved, or at least the poetry that we might recite to a girlfriend to seem deep. [*Laughter*] Of course, we still hum the great songs by the musicians in this room; songs that in many cases have been the soundtrack of our lives over decades.

And that's why I'm so proud to have this opportunity to celebrate the contributions that all of you have made to our country. It's why we

have to remember that our strength as a people runs deeper than our military might, it runs deeper than our GDP; it's also about our values and our ideals that each generation is called to uphold and that each artist helps us better understand.

And it's also about the capacity of the arts and the humanities to connect us to one another. In a nation as big as ours, as diverse as ours, as full as debate and consternation as it sometimes is, what the people we honor here today remind us of is that kernel of ourselves that connects to everyone else and allows us to get out of ourselves, to see through somebody else's eyes, to step in their shoes. And what more vital ingredient is there for our democracy than that?

In 1962, in the last months of his life, the poet Robert Frost was dispatched by President Kennedy to visit the Soviet Union. And it was a gesture of good will. Frost traveled and gave readings, filling venues all across Russia. What he really wanted to do, though, was have a chance to talk to Khrushchev. Frost was a poet, but he was also a pretty tough guy.

It wasn't until the end of his trip that the meeting was arranged. And when they met, even though Frost was frail and sick, he decided he had to speak his mind to the Soviet leader. And Frost stood up and he said, "A great nation makes great poetry." And then he told Khrushchev that he should reunite East and West Berlin.

A great nation should make great poetry. Like so many artists and musicians and writers and poets before him, and so many that came after him, Robert Frost wasn't afraid to say his piece or speak truth to power. He wasn't afraid to tell what was on his mind. He wasn't held back by convention or what was considered normal or acceptable.

And that is an incredible power, an incredible resource. And we're seeing that power all across the world today. That's what challenges us. That's what pushes us to be better, to be more faithful to the sense of humanity that so often can be lost in the experiences of our daily lives.

Pissarro once said, "Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble places." That is the blessing of those that we honor here today, and we are blessed that they are able to share what they see and what they hear.

So now it is my privilege to present these medals to our recipients in both the arts and the humanities.

[*At this point, Maj. Barrett M. Bernard, USA, Army Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.*]

The President. I think it is entirely appropriate for all of us to stand and give a warm congratulations to the recipients of these awards. Not the recipients, you don't have to stand.

Well, congratulations to all the recipients. We're going to take some quick pictures with them, and then usually we have a party around here. [*Laughter*] Our Marine Band is very good, and the food is pretty good around here too. So enjoy yourselves, and thanks again for helping us to celebrate these extraordinary men and women of letters and the arts. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to jazz saxophonist and National Medal of Arts recipient Theodore W. "Sonny" Rollins.

Statement on the Death of Minister of Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti of Pakistan
March 2, 2011

I am deeply saddened by the assassination of Pakistan's minister for minority affairs Shahbaz Bhatti today in Islamabad and condemn in the strongest possible terms this horrific act of violence. We offer our profound condolences to his family, loved ones, and all who knew and worked with him. Minister Bhatti fought for and sacrificed his life for the universal values

that Pakistanis, Americans, and people around the world hold dear: the right to speak one's mind, to practice one's religion as one chooses, and to be free from discrimination based on one's background or beliefs.

He was clear eyed about the risks of speaking out, and despite innumerable death threats, he insisted he had a duty to his fellow Pakistanis to defend equal rights and tolerance from those who preach division, hate, and violence. He most courageously challenged the blasphemy laws of Pakistan under which individuals have been prosecuted for speaking their minds or practicing their own faiths. Those who committed this crime should be brought to justice, and those who share Mr. Bhatti's vision of tolerance and religious freedom must be able to live free from fear. Minister Bhatti will be missed by all who knew him, and the United States will continue to stand with those who are dedicated to his vision of tolerance and dignity for all human beings.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation To Continue Federal Government Appropriations

March 2, 2011

I'm pleased that Democrats and Republicans in Congress came together and passed a plan that will cut spending and keep the Government running for the next 2 weeks. But we cannot keep doing business this way. Living with the threat of a shutdown every few weeks is not responsible, and it puts our economic progress in jeopardy. That's why I'm calling on Democratic and Republican leaders of Congress to begin meeting immediately with the Vice President, my Chief of Staff, and Budget Director so we can find common ground on a budget that makes sure we are living within our means. This agreement should cut spending and reduce deficits without damaging economic growth or gutting investments in education, research, and development that will create jobs and secure our future. This agreement should be bipartisan, it should be free of any party's social or political agenda, and it should be reached without delay.

NOTE: The statement referred to White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley. It also referred to H.J. Res. 44.

Statement on Senator Daniel K. Akaka's Decision Not To Seek Reelection

March 2, 2011

Danny Akaka answered the call to serve right after high school by joining the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II. When he returned to Honolulu, he continued to serve the people of Hawaii as an educator before embarking on more than three decades of distinguished service in both Houses of Congress. Danny spent his career fighting for our troops, veterans, and their families, and for the rights of Native Hawaiians. He worked tirelessly to reform Wall Street and to make sure that consumers and small-business owners are treated fairly in our system. His voice in the Senate will be missed.

Michelle and I would like to join the people of Hawaii in saying mahalo to Danny for his lifetime of service and offer both him and Millie our best wishes for the future.

NOTE: The statement referred to M. Mildred Akaka, wife of Sen. Akaka.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Zimbabwe
March 2, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2011.

The crisis constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. While some advances have been made in Zimbabwe, particularly on economic stabilization, since the signing of the power-sharing agreement, the absence of progress on the most fundamental reforms needed to ensure rule of law and democratic governance leaves Zimbabweans vulnerable to ongoing repression and presents a continuing threat to peace and security in the region and the foreign policy of the United States. Politically motivated violence and intimidation, and the undermining of the power-sharing agreement by elements of the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front party, continue to be of grave concern. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

The United States welcomes the opportunity to modify the targeted sanctions regime when blocked persons demonstrate a clear commitment to respect the rule of law, democracy, and human rights. The United States has committed to continue its review of the targeted sanctions list for Zimbabwe to ensure it remains current and addresses the concerns for which it was created. We hope that events on the ground will allow us to take additional action to recognize progress in Zimbabwe in the future. The goal of a peaceful, democratic Zimbabwe remains foremost in our consideration of any action.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
March 2, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's News Conference With President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico
March 3, 2011

President Obama. Good afternoon. I am delighted to welcome my friend and partner, President Calderon, back to the White House. I want to discuss our meeting today and then address the situation in Libya.

President Calderon was last here, along with the First Lady, Senora Zavala, for a very productive state visit last spring, a visit that reflected the new era of respect and cooperation and partnership between our two countries. We've since worked together as global partners at the G–20 summits in Toronto and Seoul and at the APEC summit in Yokohama. And I very much appreciate President Calderon being here today

to deepen the cooperation that is so essential to the prosperity and security of both of our countries.

Of course, the relationship between the United States and Mexico isn't measured just in the partnership between two Presidents. It's evident every day in the strong bonds between our two societies. It's the thousands of people who work together, at every level—Federal, State, and community levels—to keep our citizens safe, to keep our economies growing. It's the tens of thousands of students and teachers and researchers in exchanges between our schools and our universities.

It's the 1 million people who cross our shared border every day—tourists and businesspeople—sustaining one of the largest trading relationships in the world. And it's our families and our friends, the many Americans living in Mexico, and the tens of millions of Mexican Americans who make outstanding contributions to this country every single day.

As I said, we're also global partners. As part of the G–20, we're advancing the global economic recovery, and I look forward to visiting Mexico when President Calderon hosts the G–20 next year. Together, we've responded to the earthquake in Haiti, and we're securing the world's vulnerable nuclear materials. I especially want to commend President Calderon for Mexico's successful leadership of the Cancun conference, including progress towards a green fund that he himself helped to get started and champion and which will help developing countries adapt to climate change.

Most recently, our governments have spoken out forcefully for the human rights of the Libyan people, and Mexico played a leading role at the United Nations in suspending Libya from the Human Rights Council.

President Calderon, this not only reflects our commitment to the shared values of freedom and justice and rule of law. It's also another example of Mexico's global leadership, as you said in your address to our Congress last year, that "Mexico is standing tall" and ready to take its "rightful place in the world."

It is this appreciation of the great bonds between Americans and Mexicans and the values and responsibilities that we hold in common that allowed us to make progress once again today.

We're working to expand the trade that creates jobs for our peoples. Remember, Mexico is the second largest market for American exports. It supports some 1 million American jobs. And our exports to Mexico are growing faster than they are with the rest of the world.

So we're moving ahead with plans for a 21st-century border so people and goods can cross securely and efficiently. We're working to coordinate and streamline regulations and get rid of unnecessary trade barriers to make it easier to do business together. We're making new investments in clean energy partnerships, including green buildings and smart grid technologies. And based on negotiations so far, I'm hopeful that we can conclude an agreement by the end of the year to develop new sources of energy in the Gulf of Mexico.

I'm especially pleased to announce that, after nearly 20 years, we found—finally have found a clear path to resolving the dispute over trucking between our two countries. I thank President Calderon and his team, as well as my Transportation Secretary, Ray LaHood, and our U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Ron Kirk, for reaching this proposed agreement. I look forward to consulting with Congress and moving forward in a way that strengthens the safety of cross-border trucking, lifts tariffs on billions of dollars of U.S. goods, expands our exports to Mexico, and creates job on both sides of the border.

We're also deepening our cooperation against the drug cartels that threaten both our peoples. As I've said before, President Calderon and the Mexican people have shown extraordinary courage in the fight for their country. Tens of thousands of Mexicans—innocent citizens and dedicated security forces—have lost their lives. I have reaffirmed to President Calderon that in this cause, Mexico has a full partner with the United States. Because whether they live in Texas or Tijuana, our people have a right to be safe in their communities.

So we are continuing to speed up the delivery of equipment and training that our Mexi-

can partners need to keep up this fight. As President Calderon cracks down on money laundering in Mexico, we're putting unprecedented pressure on cartels and their finances here in the United States. And we thank our Mexican partners for their close cooperation following the murder of one of our immigration and customs agents, Special Agent Jaime Zapata.

I reiterated that the United States accepts our shared responsibility for the drug violence. So to combat the southbound flow of guns and money, we are screening all southbound rail cargo, seizing many more guns bound for Mexico, and we are putting more gunrunners behind bars. And as part of our new drug control strategy, we are focused on reducing the demand for drugs through education, prevention, and treatment.

We have also discussed immigration, an issue on which both countries have responsibilities. As I told President Calderon, I remain deeply committed to fixing our broken immigration system with comprehensive reform that continues to secure our borders, enforces our laws, including against businesses that break the law, and requiring accountability from undocumented workers. And we have to conduct this debate in a way that upholds our values as a nation of both laws and immigrants. So I'm eager to work with Republicans and Democrats to get this reform done, which is vital to the U.S. economy.

Finally, I'm looking forward to receiving insights from the President as I prepare for my trip to Latin America this month, which will be an opportunity to strengthen our security cooperation throughout the region.

Mr. President, thank you for your partnership and for deepening the bonds between our countries, which only grow stronger each time that we meet.

Now, before I turn it over to President Calderon, I want to address the situation in Libya.

The United States, and the entire world, continues to be outraged by the appalling violence against the Libyan people. The United States is helping to lead an international effort to deter further violence, put in place unprecedented sanctions to hold the Qadhafi Government accountable, and support the aspirations of the Libyan people.

We are also responding quickly to the urgent humanitarian needs that are developing. Tens of thousands of people from many different countries are fleeing Libya, and we commend the governments of Tunisia and Egypt for their response, even as they go through their own political transitions. I have, therefore, approved the use of U.S. military aircraft to help move Egyptians who have fled to the Tunisian border to get back home to Egypt. I've authorized USAID to charter additional civilian aircraft to help people from other countries find their way home, and we're supporting the efforts of international organizations to evacuate people as well.

I've also directed USAID to send humanitarian assistance teams to the Libyan border so that they can work with the United Nations, NGOs, and other international partners inside Libya to address the urgent needs of the Libyan people.

Going forward, we will continue to send a clear message: The violence must stop. Muammar Qadhafi has lost the legitimacy to lead, and he must leave. Those who perpetrate violence against the Libyan people will be held accountable. And the aspirations of the Libyan people for freedom, democracy, and dignity must be met.

President Calderon.

President Calderon. Thank you very much, President Obama. Thank you so much for your hospitality. Ladies and gentlemen of the media, good afternoon.

President Barack Obama and I have held a very valuable conversation concerning the status of our bilateral cooperation and many aspects of this. As always, it has been very satisfying for me to see that we agree on the basic principle of coresponsibility. And I thank you, Mr. President, for your invitation to hold this working visit here in the city of Washington.

Some of the things that we evaluated is that our governments have progressed substantially on many of these aspects. The results of our

cooperation in some aspects—unprecedented cooperation—have been translated into concrete examples, such as the opening last year in 2010 of the three first new border crossings over the past 10 years.

My state visit last year, as you mentioned, Mr. President, and the ongoing meetings that we have held and that we will continue to have in the immediate future have been especially important to our bilateral relationship so as to generate confidence—the confidence that we have today. We know today that we could—need to continue to be personally involved so as to ensure that the objectives that we trace are reached, such as those dealt with today. And we have broached the following subjects today.

First, internationally—at the international level, we have reiterated that Mexico and the United States are authentic, strategic partners, as can be seen by our joint work on the global and regional agendas. We have achieved substantive progress, as mentioned by President Obama, in matters such as climate change during the Conference of the Parties number 16. And now we have made efforts to make the agreements reached in Cancun operational and as well as to adopt the next steps for the Conference of the Parties number 17 in Durban.

Both countries will also play an important role within the G–20, a mechanism that Mexico will be presiding over next year and in which we have reached important agreements for stability and recovery of the international economy. And in this context I would like to congratulate President Obama for the visit that he will be making to Brazil, Chile, and El Salvador in a few weeks' time. Greater dialogue among the United States and Latin American nations will always be beneficial to the hemisphere and beneficial not just for Latin American countries, but also for the United States.

The specific case of Central America, in addition—here we've agreed to continue to work with the U.S. Government so as to achieve more determined cooperation in support of regional efforts to strengthen the rule of law and to fight transnational organized crime.

Secondly, in terms of the border, both President Obama and I agree that we must turn this era—area into the land of opportunities and not of conflict. Last year we adopted a declaration on the administration of a 21st-century border which we want both for the United States and Mexico. And since then, the bilateral executive committee entrusted with that implementation has agreed to a plan of action in addition to issuing a joint declaration to prevent border violence, so as to enable us to avoid tragic events such as those that we've seen on both sides of the border.

Thirdly, in terms of immigration, President Obama has always recognized—invariably recognized—the contributions of immigrants to the economy and society of the United States. And I recognition—recognize and value his clear and determined support for the adoption of a comprehensive migratory reform in this country, as well as his firm commitment to the human and civil rights of communities, regardless of their point of origin. I've expressed to him my concern for the proliferation of local initiatives that are against the interests or the rights of immigrant communities.

Fourth, in terms of competitiveness, Mexico has a regional perspective. The United States and Mexico can and must make the most of the comparative advantages that make us unique as a region and that would enable us to convert, to turn North America, in its entirety, into the most competitive region of the world. I am convinced that together we can achieve this.

The North American Free Trade Agreement was a great step forward for the commercial—trade integration of the region. It generated hundreds of thousands, even millions, of jobs in the United States and in Mexico. And we are ready to work to deepen and to make the most of this relationship.

We must work to efficiently—to take advantage of the relative abundance of capital in the United States with the labor manpower available in Mexico through productive actions, investments in our countries, as well as the access that is secure, orderly, and legal of national workers from Mexico in the U.S. market.

Our governments—something that is very important to us—have today reached an agreement, an agreement to solve our differences with respect to cross-border cargo trucking that had existed for many years. As I said, this has existed for a long time despite the fact that we had—that the integrated system for transportation existed and benefited both countries. It was strengthening our competitiveness and it generated jobs and it existed since 1994 when we agreed on the NAFTA.

In this sense, Mexico will be suspended on a—will be phasing out duty reprisals after noncompliance of the United States—of the free trade agreement of North America by the United States and will be ending—and as a result of this, will be furthering liberalization of cargo transportation. The objective of my Government has always been to reach a solution that's mutually acceptable in this field.

And fifth, in the chapter of security, both governments have taken on our positions as coresponsible parties in the fight against transnational organized crime. This is a paradigm change in our relationship. And today we have reached increased levels of exchange of information that are unheard of in the past. I would like to thank President Obama for the clarity with which he speaks of the effects that the consumption of drugs has on his country, as well as the illegal traffic of weapons and of monies into Mexican territory. I know that together we can achieve ever greater results.

Last year was the year where we had the greatest number of achievements in the capture of the number of criminals. Unprecedented number of criminals were caught, and this is the result of the increase of the institutional capacity of our agencies as well as international cooperation in terms of information and intelligence.

I also truly value the clear effort of the United States through transfer of equipment and training programs to our efforts—added to our efforts of institution—institutional efforts. And this I am sure will further our efforts tremendously. And I thank you for your support there, Mr. President. And I also am grateful for the clarity with which President Obama has recognized the great sacrifices that the Mexican society has had to make in view of organized crime and our fight of drug trafficking.

In the fight for the security of Mexico, thousands of military officers and members of the police force have died in Mexico. They fall in the line of duty. And to these deaths we add the death of Agent Jaime Zapata from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency of the United States. And I would like to add my deepest condolences to his relatives, to the people and Government of Mexico in view of his death—Government of the United States in view of his death.

I would like to tell you that the suspected perpetrator of his murder and his gang has been arrested, and we hope to bring them to justice. His death must urge us to continue to work together so as to ensure a prosperous and peaceful future for our region.

Ladies and gentlemen, today I'd like to say that I thank the hospitality of President Obama, and I would reiterate my trust, my confidence in the Government and institutions of this country. This country is a good friend to Mexico, as is President Obama. This opportunity represents for me a chance to strongly renew our efforts and to redouble our efforts to accomplish the security that our peoples deserve.

At the same time, I would like to congratulate President Obama for the leadership that he has shown in the problem of concern to all of us in North Africa, heading up the responsible efforts of the people and Government of the United States to quickly find solutions to this problem.

Mr. President, once again, thank you ever so much for your hospitality, the friendship that you have always shown to Mexico, the responsibility that your Government, your administration has unprecedently taken on in the subjects—the issues that are of common interest to us. Our bilateral relationship, my friends, does not only have a huge impact on the lives of Mexicans and Americans, but today it's taken on with increasing strength and clarity and coordination by both of our governments.

Once again, thank you for your personal commitment, the cooperation, and coresponsibility of your Government. We will continue to work together and harder to achieve the prosperity of both the Mexican and U.S. peoples. Thank you very much.

National Football League/Situation in Libya/Safety of U.S. Agents Working in Mexico

President Obama. I think we're going to take one question each. Ben Feller, AP [Associated Press].

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I have a question for both Presidents, and in your case, sir, I suppose it's a classic two-parter. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. With a follow-up.

President Obama. With a follow-up? So making it a three-parter? [*Laughter*]

Q. Thank you, sir. On Libya, I wanted to follow up on your comments. Colonel Qadhafi is vowing to fight to the end, and in the meantime, the people of his country are dying. Now, I know that you've admonished the press corps about impatience, and I know that the international community and the United States have taken several steps and you've named many of those today. But I'm wondering while this is happening, if you fear this is headed for a bloody stalemate. And more specifically, is a no-fly zone something that you're actively considering? And can you talk about what you see is your broader doctrine for military intervention in a crisis like this?

The other topic is something that is quite different but does matter to millions of Americans. The National Football League is on the brink of a complete shutdown as of tonight over a labor dispute. Obviously, that's an economic issue for cities, but also something that a lot of people just care about. And I'm wondering if it's something that you'd be willing to personally intervene on. And if not, why not?

President Calderon, sir, I was wondering your thoughts on an issue that's come up about potentially arming U.S. agents in Mexico; it's come up here in the U.S. Attorney General Holder has raised it as at least something that should be considered. I'm wondering if you will consider it, and if that came up with President Obama.

Thank you both.

President Obama. All right. Let me deal with football first. [*Laughter*] You've got owners, most of whom are worth close to a billion dollars. You got players who are making millions of dollars. My working assumption at a time when people are having to cut back, compromise, and worry about making the mortgage and paying for their kids' college education is, is that the two parties should be able to work it out without the President of the United States intervening.

I'm a big football fan, but I also think that for an industry that's making $9 billion a year in revenue, they can figure out how to divide it up in a sensible way and be true to their fans who are the ones who obviously allow for all the money that they're making. So my expectation and hope is, is that they will resolve it without me intervening, because it turns out I've got a lot of other stuff to do. [*Laughter*]

With respect to Libya, I think you asked about, sort of, do I have a doctrine. My approach throughout the convulsions that have swept through the Middle East is: number one, no violence against citizens; number two, that we stand for freedom and democracy. And in the situation in Libya, what you've seen is: number one, violence against citizens and the active urging of violence against unarmed citizens by Qadhafi; and number two, you have seen with great clarity that he has lost legitimacy with his people.

And so let me just be very unambiguous about this. Colonel Qadhafi needs to step down from power and leave. That is good for his country. That is good for his people. It's the right thing to do.

Those around him have to understand that violence that they perpetrate against innocent civilians will be monitored and they will be held accountable for it. And so to the extent that they are making calculations in their own minds about which way history is moving, they should know history is moving against Colonel Qadhafi and that their support for him and their willingness to carry out orders that are di-

rect violence against citizens is something that ultimately they will be held accountable for.

With respect to our willingness to engage militarily, what I've instructed the Department of Defense, as well as our State Department and all those who are involved in international affairs, to examine is a full range of options. I don't want us hamstrung. I want us to be making our decisions based on what's going to be best for the Libyan people, in consultation with the international community.

And we are doing that not just here in the United States within our own agencies, but we're also doing it in consultation with NATO. We have already engineered the most rapid and forceful set of sanctions that have ever been applied internationally. We started unilaterally freezing $30 billion worth of assets, imposing severe sanctions against those in the Libyan Government who've been carrying out some of these crimes. And as a consequence of that leadership, what we've seen is, I think, broad-based mobilization around the international community.

You are right that there is a danger of a stalemate that over time could be bloody, and that is something that we are obviously considering. So what I want to make sure of is that the United States has full capacity to act potentially rapidly if the situation deteriorated in such a way that you had a humanitarian crisis on our hands or a situation in which civilians were—defenseless civilians were finding themselves trapped and in great danger.

I think it's very important for us to do this in consultation, though, with the international community. One of the extraordinary successes of Egypt was the full ownership that the Egyptian people felt for that transformation. That has served the Egyptian people well. It serves U.S. interests well. We did not see anti-American sentiment arising out of that movement in Egypt precisely because they felt that we hadn't tried to engineer or impose a particular outcome, but rather they owned it.

The same is happening in Tunisia. And I think that the region will be watching carefully to make sure we're on the right side of history, but also that we are doing so as a member of the world community and being willing to act on behalf of these values, but doing so in a way that takes all the various equities into account.

So just to put, sort of, the final point on it, we are looking at every option that's out there. In addition to the nonmilitary actions that we've taken, I want to make sure that those full range of options are available to me. Some of them may end up being humanitarian. I mean, the biggest priority that we have right now is you've got tens of thousand people—tens of thousands of people who are gathered at a border, and we've got to make sure that they can get home.

And that's why we—we're using some of our military aircrafts in addition to civilian aircrafts to help on that front. There may be situations in which Qadhafi is hunkered down in his compound, but the economy or food distribution systems in Tripoli, for example, start deteriorating, and we're going to have to figure out how do we potentially get food in there.

So there are a whole range of options, military and nonmilitary, that we're examining, and we'll be making these decisions based on what's best for the Libyan people and how can we make sure that we're minimizing the harm to innocent civilians during this process. Throughout all this, we will continue to send the clear message that it's time for Qadhafi to go.

Q. And a no-fly zone is one of those options still under consideration?

President Obama. That is one of the options that we would be looking at.

President Calderon. First, in terms of Libya, I recognize and applaud the efforts undertaken by President Obama, as I said previously, to seek a solution in line with international law for this situation. For Mexico, it's absolutely clear that we cannot—it's not possible that civilians be massacred and not go punished, using weapons that are for the exclusive use of war. We must do everything that we can to avoid or stop that massacre.

Mexico indeed has presented a resolution within the framework of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. And in this Libya has been sanctioned by the Commission. And we are of course taking part, insofar as we

are able to, in the search for a solution to this problem.

I believe that today it is—problem to revalue the principles and the values of human rights anywhere in the world—the principles and values that we recognize and value. We have them in North American society and people, in terms of that we condemn any act of violence against people where people are risking their lives, in terms of the use of weapons.

We condemn any act of violence against these people, and we believe that people must have the best conditions to guarantee their work, including their personal security. And in this effort I know that we have the support of different agencies of the Government of the United States who have contributed enormously to the solution of the problems that we are facing together under the principle of shared responsibility that we are consolidating.

I must nonetheless clarify that there are very important legal restrictions in this matter in Mexico, as is probably the case in other countries, and most likely the United States, with respect to the actions of foreign agents in Mexican land. The law does not allow agents of the United States or of any other country to take part in tasks involving justice enforcement in our territory. As a result, they cannot carry weapons or undertake operational tasks. Their functions, in line with our treaties, are limited to the exchange of information and technical assistance to support Mexican authorities in these tasks. So there's an important legal restriction that exists.

But it's very clear for me as well that we must find the way of enhancing the level of protection of any and all agents who are acting within the framework of the law against crime. And of course, we are deeply analyzing alternatives for this and in dialogue with the Mexican Congress, who is the party that has the final word—the final say on this matter.

And finally, on the issue of football, I'm not an expert; my wife is, though. And I will ask her about it. I'm sure that she's very concerned about the situation. But allow me to say that football is very important for many Mexicans.

[*At this point, President Calderon spoke in English.*]

So for that, whatever you need, with the exception of money, you can count on us. [*Laughter*] But fix that, please.

President Obama. I will say that at the state dinner, the First Lady of Mexico seemed quite excited to see Mark Sanchez there. Yes. I don't know if that was of concern to you. [*Laughter*]

President Calderon. No. It's okay. Actually——

[*President Calderon spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated be an interpreter.*]

You've already thrown the coin—flipped the coin in a Jets game—Mrs. Zavala did.

[*President Calderon called on a reporter, but the remarks were not translated.*]

Mexico-U.S. Border Security and Drug Control Cooperation/Death of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agent Jaime Zapata

Q. Taking advantage of the moment and continuing the subject matter, I'm not going to ask many questions, but I will be very concrete. First, directly for President Obama, the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution allows American citizens to carry weapons, and this principle is defended. However, President Calderon has said that this law in Congress—that this could actually go against U.S. agents, and this has happened. So, President Obama, you—in Mexico we have the veto, the power of veto. I don't know how far you have the ability to veto that law that has been approved. And if you have that responsibility, why don't you do so, sir? How long are we going to allow Mexicans to be murdered—and not just Mexicans, but now Americans as well?

Now, with respect to the Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano has sent a bill or spoken to Congress with respect to the possibility of allowing U.S. agents to bear arms in our country. President Calderon has already answered this to a certain extent, but he's also said that he will be searching for mechanisms.

What types of mechanisms can be found so as to keep them safe? And the people who murdered Zapata—well, in Mexican terms—Zapata, who was the alleged murderer of Zapata, the extradition of this man, of this alleged perpetrator has been requested. Madam Napolitano has mentioned this. President Calderon, how far are you going to go in those efforts? And there you would have my questions.

President Obama. Well, the Second Amendment in this country is part of our Constitution, and the President of the United States is bound by our Constitution. So I believe in the Second Amendment. It does provide for Americans the right to bear arms for their protection, for their safety, for hunting, for a wide range of uses. That does not mean that we cannot constrain gunrunners from shipping guns into Mexico. And so we believe that we can shape an enforcement strategy that slows the flow of guns into Mexico, while at the same time preserving our Constitution.

You asked whether I have veto power over a particular bill. I think that the challenge that we have right now is not a particular bill, but rather that we are trying to work our way through more effective enforcement mechanisms to prevent straw purchasers from buying caches of weapons, transporting them across the border.

We've made progress on that front, given the authority and administrative power that we already possess. We have seen a significant increase in the number of weapons that have been confiscated. We have put more and more people behind bars for the transfer of weapons across the border into Mexico. We recognize that it's not enough and that we've got to do more.

Part of that job is to enforce the laws that are already on the books more effectively. Part of it may be to provide additional tools to law enforcement so that we can prevent the shipment of these weapons across the border.

But I do want to emphasize—and I emphasized this privately with President Calderon—we are very mindful that the battle President Calderon is fighting inside of Mexico is not just his battle; it's also ours. We have to take responsibility just as he's taking responsibility. And that's true with respect to guns flowing from north to south; it's true about cash flowing north to south. And so we've stepped up our enforcement and monitoring of bulk cash transfers across the borders that oftentimes finance these cartels.

So we're putting more and more resources into this. One of the things that I think that President Calderon and I have discussed is how we can strengthen border security on both sides, so that drugs flowing north or guns and cash flowing south, that we are able at all these points to intervene, interdict in a way that doesn't, on the other hand, slow the commerce and trade that is so important between our two countries.

It's a challenging task. We have a big border. We have a lot of people going back and forth. It's very important economically. But it is something that we have to continue to work on.

And I just want to say to all the people in the Mexican press that I have nothing but admiration for President Calderon and his willingness to take this on. The easy thing to do would be for him to ignore the corrosive, corrupting influence of these drug cartels within Mexico. That would be the easy thing to do. He's taking the hard path. And he's shown great courage and great risk in doing so.

And the United States will support him in any ways that we can in order to help him achieve his goals, because his goals are our goals as well. And they should be the goals of the Mexican people, because the notion that you would want these drug cartels to become more and more powerful and have greater and greater influence in the political life and the economic life and the cultural life of your country, I think, is something that nobody would want.

With respect to arming our agents, I think President Calderon was very clear. There are laws in place in Mexico that say that our agents should not be armed. The relationship that we have is as President Calderon described it: When it comes to our partnership, our cooperation in battling the drug cartels, our job is to help with information, it's to help with equipment, it's to

help in coordination. We are in an advisory capacity; we do not carry out law enforcement activities inside of Mexico.

What we can do is to make sure that our cooperation is strengthened and deepened and becomes more effective over time. And we're constantly refining how we do that in a way that is respectful of Mexico's sovereignty. And obviously, I'm concerned about our own agents who are down there. And so I assure you that we will be examining all our procedures and protocols in terms of how our agents travel throughout Mexico. And we'll be working in close contact with Mexican law enforcement, who I'm sure will have important advice in terms of how we operate in that region.

But this cooperation has made great progress. We expect it to continue to make more progress in the future.

President Calderon. I'd like to thank President Obama for this wonderful support in terms of weapons. Others have made similar efforts before his administration in terms of deterring the flow of weapons to Mexico, but we know that what has to do with internal homeland security and the Attorney General are making important efforts and we know that even more weapons traffickers, gunrunners, have been caught than ever before.

There's a great deal that has to be improved in terms of how to share information, how to trace the weapons. And I also recognize, as I said, the efforts, knowing the large restrictions that President Obama and his administration have at a political level. They're making great efforts internally so that through administrative measures we can broach this matter.

One of the things that I suggested during our conversation—and I think we still have to look at this very carefully—is if we can find a means of sealing ports of entry along the border. As the President said and as I said, through the use of nonintrusive mechanisms for detection, we could assuredly have the safe and secure border that both nations want, that both peoples want. We all want to have a safe border. I believe it's possible, although it will require huge technological and financial resources to achieve it. But I think it's a way of ensuring security without affecting the Second Amendment rights of U.S. citizens, and at the same time stop the flow of drugs northbound, monies and guns southbound.

I would insist upon the legal restrictions that exist in Mexico as in other countries with respect to intervention and the bearing of arms by U.S. agents. But on this subject, I'll have to speak to Members of Congress, particularly the Senate, to explore different alternatives. And I think we have to look at all alternatives that are enabled to us by the Constitution and the law, mechanisms of protection—special mechanisms of protection, clear delineation of the areas where we can collaborate, for instance.

The criminals themselves, they tell us that they didn't know that they were attacking U.S. agents in their attack, so it's not that that's what they wanted to do. But I think at any rate this is still a very important sign—a warning sign to all of us where we have to be—indicating that we have to be very careful about how we care for all of our agents—not just Mexican, American—all agents. We have to have a specific policy that's much more daring in this sense.

And I think that here, not just in terms of weapons, guns, we have to think in a much more open manner and seek much more creative solutions. It seems to me that we are experiencing extraordinary circumstances that call for extraordinary actions by our governments.

Now, with respect to the extradition of this criminal, it's something that we hadn't really discussed. I don't know if President Obama wanted to discuss this. We still have not finished our meetings yet. But—although we have to review what the law stipulates in terms of the extradition for each case of it, I'm, in truth, very convinced that these cases have to be brought to trial. There is the political will, full political will, that this individual be brought to justice with the full weight of the law, whether that be in the United States or in Mexico, if the law allows it. In terms of a request for extradition, I'd have to reserve my opinion in this sense because it will depend on what the law stipulates in this sense. Of course,

there is a political will to cooperate in this matter as well as on many others.

President Obama. I didn't comment on the extradition issue. Let me just emphasize [that]* we have made a request for extradition [intend to seek the extradition of those involved].* I think beyond that it's probably not appropriate to comment. Okay? But we expect the full weight of the law to be brought against this perpetrator.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:17 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; Mark Sanchez, quarterback, National Football League's New York Jets; and Julian Zapata Espinoza, suspected gunman in the death of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agent Jaime Zapata. President Calderon referred to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the 16th session, held in Cancun, Mexico, from November 19 through December 10, 2010, and the 17th session, scheduled to meet in Durban, South Africa, from November 28 through December 9. President Calderon spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks During a Tour of Miami Central High School in Miami, Florida
March 4, 2011

Thank you so much, everybody. Look, I could not be prouder of you. I couldn't be prouder of your teacher and your principal. The reason we came down here is because this is a model of what's possible in so many schools across the country that were having trouble just a few years ago. Because of great leadership, we've been able to turn it around. And I can just tell that the way everybody is presenting themselves and the seriousness with which you take your work, you guys are all going to succeed, and you'll help our country succeed too.

So all right? Keep it up. Okay.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Renina Turner, principal, Miami Central High School. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at Miami Central High School in Miami
March 4, 2011

What's up, Rockets? How are you? Well, thank you. It is great to see all of you. I am thrilled to be here at Miami Central. [*Applause*] That's all right, I'm excited too.

Listen, I just want to—[*applause*]—thank you. I'm not going to give a long speech here because I'm going to give a long speech in the gymnasium. But since we couldn't seat everybody in there, I wanted to make sure that I came by and just said to all of you how very proud we are of the work that you guys have been doing.

You know, just a few years ago, this school was really in trouble. And a lot of young people, they were seeing their futures slip away because they were dropping out, they weren't focused. And the turnaround that's been accomplished here is the reason that I wanted to come here, because what you guys are doing is not only helping to shape your future and ensuring your long-term success, but what it's also doing is it's sending a message to kids all across the country that there's nothing we can't accomplish when we put our minds to it.

* White House correction.

So my main message to all of you is going to be, I need you to keep on working hard. I need you to keep on taking pride in your school. I need you guys to keep on listening to your teachers and working hard. If you do, I'm confident you're going to be successful. And you will continue to be role models for young people who are coming up here in Miami-Dade, but also young people all across the country.

All right? So thank you, guys. I appreciate you. I love you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:39 p.m. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at Miami Central High School in Miami
March 4, 2011

The President. Hello, Rockets! Thank you! Thank you, everybody. Everybody, have a seat. It is good to be here today. I'm excited! I am thrilled to be here, Rockets. *Bonswa*. It is good to see all of you.

I want to first of all thank somebody who I think is going to end up being one of the best Education Secretaries that we've ever had, Arne Duncan, for being here. We also have—your Congresswoman, Frederica Wilson, is here. Give her a big round of applause.

Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz is here. Give her a big round of applause. Your outstanding school superintendent, Alberto Carvalho, give him a big round of applause. And a very, very impressive principal, Renina Turner, give it up for Ms. Turner.

I gather we also have some members of the football team here. I understand you guys were State champs, is that right? They look pretty big. [*Laughter*] And some of them aren't smiling, you know—[*laughter*]—they've got their game face on.

We are also honored to be joined here today by another champion of education reform, somebody who championed reform when he was in office, somebody who is now championing reform as a private citizen, Jeb Bush. And we're grateful for him being here. Aside from being a former Governor of this great State, Jeb, of course, is best known as the brother of Marvin Bush. [*Laughter*] Apparently, the rest of the family also did some work back in Washington back in the day. [*Laughter*]

The truth is I've gotten to know Jeb because his family exemplifies public service. And we are so grateful to him for the work that he's doing on behalf of education. So thank you, Jeb.

Now, I just had a chance to take a tour here at Miami Central—[*applause*]—and met your outstanding principal, Ms. Turner. I talked to some of the great students who are here. We went through a lab. They had robots; they had computers and vectors and this and that. And I was a little confused, but I nodded, pretending like I understood what was going on. [*Laughter*] And it's inspiring to think about where you were just a few years ago and then where you are today, right? You came together to turn this school around.

Audience members. Yes, we did.

The President. And I think the rest of us can learn something from that, because that's what we're going to need to do all across the country right now.

We are at a pivotal turning point. We just came through a tough recession that's taken a big toll on families here in Florida and all across the country. And to accelerate our recovery in the short term, we took some essential steps to spur hiring and economic growth, including tax cuts that are making Americans' paychecks bigger and letting businesses write off their investments——

[*At this point, the President coughed.*]

——excuse me. And I'm proud that Republicans and Democrats came together to get that done.

And you're already seeing those steps make a difference. This morning we learned that the unemployment rate fell to its lowest level in

nearly 2 years. Our economy added another 222,000 jobs in the private sector. That's the 12th straight month of private sector job growth. So our economy has now added 1.5 million private sector jobs over the last year. And that's progress.

But we need to keep building on that momentum. And in a world that's more competitive, more connected than ever before, that means answering some difficult questions: How do we attract new jobs? How do we attract new businesses? How do we attract new industries to our shores? How do we grow our economy and outcompete countries around the world? How do we make sure all of you—all of our students, whether they go to Miami Central or anyplace else—how do we make sure you have a chance at the American Dream?

And that's why I'm here today. That's what I want to talk to you about, because in today's economy, companies are making decisions about where to locate and who to hire based on a few key factors. They're looking for faster, more reliable transportation and communications networks, like high-speed railroads and high-speed Internet. They're looking for a commitment to innovation and investments in basic research so that companies can profit from new ideas and new discoveries. But most of all, the single most important thing companies are looking for are highly skilled, highly educated workers. That's what they're looking for. More than ever before, companies hire where the talent is.

Now, I want all the young people here to listen, because over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs are going to require a level of education that goes beyond a high school degree. So first of all, you can't drop out. You can't even think about dropping out. [*Applause*] You can't even think about dropping out. But it's not going to be enough just to graduate from high school. You're going to need some additional education. And a good education equals a good job. If we want more good news on the jobs front, then we've got to make more investments in education. As a nation, making these investments—in education, in innovation, in infrastructure—all of them are essential.

Now, what makes it tough is that we're in a difficult fiscal situation as well. For too long, the Government has been spending more than it takes in. So in order to make sure we can keep doing our part to invest in Miami Central, to invest in your schools, to invest in Pell grants, to invest in your education, then we're also going to have to get serious about cutting whatever spending we don't need.

So what I've done is I've called for a 5-year freeze on annual domestic spending, and that freeze would cut the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade, and it will bring that kind of spending to a lower share of our economy than has been true for the last 50 years. To achieve those savings, we've proposed eliminating more than 200 Federal programs. We're freezing the salaries of hard-working civil servants for the next 2 years. We're finding ways to save billions of dollars—of tax dollars—by selling, for example, 14,000 Government properties that we don't need any more.

And that's just a start. If we're serious about tackling our long-run fiscal challenges, we're going to have to cut excessive spending wherever we find it: in defense spending, in spending on entitlements, spending through tax breaks and loopholes. And I'm going to be sitting down with Democrats and Republicans to figure out how we can reduce our deficits.

But I want everybody to understand, our job is not just to cut. Even as we find ways to cut spending, what we can't do is cut back on investments like education that will help us create jobs and grow our economy. We can't sacrifice your future.

Think about your family. Let's say something tough happens, you know, if somebody gets laid off in the family or you have a medical emergency. If you're a family that has to cut back, what do you do? First thing you do is you give up things you don't need. So you give up vacations. Maybe you eat out a little bit less. Maybe you don't buy as many new clothes. Maybe you don't buy that new car that you thought you needed. But the last thing you

give up on is saving for your child's college education. The last thing you give up on is making sure that your children have the books they need and the computers they need because you know that's going to be the key to his or her success in life over the long term.

Well, the same is true for our country. When we sacrifice our commitment to education, we're sacrificing our future. And we can't let that happen. Our kids deserve better. Our country deserves better.

And over the course of March, what we're calling "Education Month" around the White House, I'm going to be traveling the country, and Arne is going to be traveling the country, and we're going to be talking to parents and students and educators about what we need to do to achieve reform, promote responsibility, and deliver results when it comes to education.

And I decided to come here to Miami Central to kick off Education Month because you're doing what I challenged States to do shortly after I took office, and that's turning America's lowest performing schools around. This is something that hasn't received as much attention as it should. But it could hardly be more important to our country.

Right now there are about 2,000 high schools in America—about 12 percent of the total number of high schools in America—that produce nearly half of the young people who drop out of school. You've got 2,000 schools; about half the dropouts come out of those 2,000 schools. And we know these schools are often found in rural areas or in big cities like Miami. Many of these schools have lots of Haitian Americans and African Americans, Latino and other minority students.

And Miami Central used to be one of these schools. Used to. But it's important for us to remember where we've been so we know where we need to go. I mean, this used to be a place where the problems on the streets followed kids into the classrooms—it was hard for young people to learn; where the dream of college was out of reach for too many; where there was a culture of failure that brought everybody down.

Now, turning around these schools isn't easy. A lot of people used to argue, "Well, all they need is more money." But money is not alone going to do the job. We also have to reform how things are done. It isn't easy to turn around an expectation of failure and make that into an expectation of excellence. In fact, it's one of the hardest things you can do. And there is always plenty of naysayers out there who will say it's not even possible; who say that turning around a failing school means just throwing good money after bad; who say too many of these schools are beyond repair; who say we ought to give up on those schools and focus on places that have more breaks and have a little more going for them.

Here's what I say. I say I am not willing to give up on any child in America. I say I'm not willing to give up on any school in America. I do not accept failure here in America. I believe the status quo is unacceptable; it is time to change it. And it's time we came together—just like Jeb and I are doing today, coming from different parties, but we come together not as Democrats or Republicans, as Americans—to lift up all of our schools and to prepare students like you for a 21st-century economy, to give every child in America a chance to make the most of their God-given potential.

Now, the good news is we know what works. We can see it in schools and communities across the country every day. We see it in a place like Bruce Randolph School in Denver. This was rated one of the worst schools in Colorado 3 years ago, but last May graduated 97 percent of its seniors. All right? And by the way, most of them are the first in their family to go to college.

We can see it in Mastery Charter School in Philadelphia, where four times as many students are proficient in math, and violence is down 80 percent compared to just a few years ago.

And of course, we can see it right here at Miami Central. A little more than a decade ago, when the State exams started, Miami Central scored a D in each of its first 5 years. Then it scored an F in each of the 5 years after that. Halls were literally littered with garbage. One

of the buildings here was called the Fish Bowl because it was always flooded. [*Laughter*] In one survey, only a third of all students said they felt safe at school. Think about that: only a third.

Today, Mrs. Turner, all the outstanding teachers here, all the students here, you've put those days behind you. [*Applause*] You've put those days behind you. Look, I mean, I know that—I know you still face challenges. I know you still face challenges; things aren't perfect. But over the past 5 years, you started to excel academically. Performance has skyrocketed by more than 60 percent in math, about 40 percent in writing. Graduation rates went from 36 percent, now they're at 63 percent, and I expect them to be at 100 percent—[*applause*]—a hundred.

You are proving the naysayers wrong. You are proving that progress is possible. It's possible because of your principal; it's possible because of all the great teachers that are going above and beyond for their students, including the Teach for America corps members who are here today. We're proud of them. To all of the teachers here, I hope you will stay with the Miami Central family as long as you can, because this community has already benefited so much from your teaching and your mentorship and your dedication.

You know, I was reading the other day an article—this is just a couple days ago in the New York Times—about how teachers were just feeling beat up, just not feeling as if folks understood how much work went into teaching and how dedicated they were to the success of their students. And so I want to be very clear here: We are proud of what you guys do each and every day. [*Applause*] We are proud of what you do each and every day. We need to honor teachers.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. You know, countries that are successful right now academically, typically teachers are considered one of the top professions.

Now, let's face it, I mean, we also have to make sure there's accountability for our schools. And turning things around here meant replacing a principal and replacing some teachers. And that's tough work. It shouldn't be undertaken lightly. But your school did it the right way, with a process that even had the support of teachers and their local unions, because you recognized that partnership among teachers and school administrators and the community, that's the path to reform. It isn't easy. But I want to thank the school board and the superintendent and the union for working together to do the right thing for your students. You guys deserve a lot of congratulations. We appreciate you.

Progress has also been possible thanks to math and science coaches and extra learning time in after-school and Saturday school and summer school. I didn't get as much applause about that. [*Laughter*] But it's good for you guys to get more learning and be in the classroom more. You still have time for the video games. [*Laughter*] You guys never catch a break; you don't even get snow days down here, do you? [*Laughter*]

And you've got a technology program here that's preparing kids for the manufacturing jobs of tomorrow. I saw some of the work that was doing—that they were doing in this lab. It was outstanding stuff. And it matched up with—when I go to factories all across America, you can't work on a factory floor today if you don't have training in computers and you have basic math skills and understand technology. Those are the jobs of tomorrow.

You've got an entrepreneurship program that's helping students start their own businesses. And you have mentors from the local business community. You've set up a Parent Academy to make sure parents are meaningfully engaged in their children's education because you can't expect the schools to do everything; parents have to step up too and set high expectations.

I say this wherever I go. When I hear people complaining about the schools, nothing we do at school will make a difference unless all of us parents step up at home and instill our kids with self-confidence, but also self-discipline and a work ethic that are—that's at the heart of success in school and in life. School is not

supposed to be easy. Nothing worthwhile is easy. [*Applause*] Nothing worthwhile is easy.

I mean, the football players understand that. I know training to be State champs can't be easy. But why is it sometimes we think—we expect people to be working out hard on the football field, and then suddenly, everybody is surprised when you've got to work out hard in the math lab. Same principle applies. You've got to work hard to achieve your goals.

So outstanding teachers and principals, a common mission, a culture of high expectations, that's what it takes to turn a school around. That's what accounts for progress here at Miami Central. And that's why we are going to support you with what we call school improvement grants. You're one of nearly a thousand schools across America that we're helping turn around by spurring reform from the bottom up—[*applause*]—the bottom up. And the approach that we're taking with school improvement grants and school turnarounds is the same approach that we're taking on all our education reform efforts. The idea is very simple. Instead of pouring money into a broken system, we launched a competition that we call Race to the Top. And it basically says to States: Prove that you are serious about reform.

We said to all 50 States, if you show the most innovative plans for improving teacher quality and student achievement, boosting low-performing schools, then we'll show you the money.

And for less than 1 percent of what we spend on education every year, Race to the Top has led 40 States to raise their standards for teaching and learning. And those standards weren't developed by bureaucrats in Washington; Republican and Democratic Governors across the country developed these reforms. That's the kind of bottom-up approach that we need to follow. We want to work with Congress this year to fix the current education law and make sure that it focuses on responsibility and reform and results.

And because we know the single most important factor in a student's success from the moment they step into school is the person standing in front of the classroom, we want to recruit and prepare a new generation of teachers, including 100,000 new math and science teachers over the next decade. We've got to get them in the classroom.

With all of these steps, I am confident that by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. That's our goal. [*Applause*] That's our goal. That's how we'll outeducate other countries. That's how we'll outcompete with other countries. That's how we'll win the future for the United States of America.

So I'm going to keep the pressure on everybody in Washington. I know Jeb and superintendent and everybody here, you're going to stay focused on students in the Sunshine State. And I know that Mrs. Turner, she's not going to let up until Miami Central goes from that F grade all the way up to an A grade. Mrs. Turner means business.

Mrs. Turner means business. You know, she has that nice pretty smile, and she's all quiet. [*Laughter*] But you can tell she's, like, "No, don't mess with me." [*Laughter*] That's right.

Of course, ultimately, Ms. Turner, she'd say for herself, she's not the only reason Miami Central has been making progress; she's not the only reason you're turning this school around. The most important reason is you, the students here at Miami Central. A few years ago, when it looked like the State might have to shut down Miami Central, the students took matters into their own hands. You took control of your own destiny. The—you said some things that are worth repeating. Here are some of the things that students said: "We're going to do more than pass the [State] test. We're going to kill it." Quote: "I don't want my school to close. We can't let that happen." "We really, really tried hard this year. We don't give up." "If we were going to get through this successfully, we've got to come together as a student body."

So that's what you guys did. You came together as a student body. You didn't give up. And that's why I'm going to be leaving here so full of hope. I'm full of hope about Miami Central's future; I'm full of hope about America's future, because I'm full of hope about your future.

And, Rockets, if you keep on reaching for success and show the same passion, the same

determination, the same hard work, the same devotion to excellence, I'm confident we're not only going to lift up our schools, we will produce the best educated people in the world, our economy will grow, our country will prosper, and a new and better day will come for the American people.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4 p.m.

Remarks at a Reception for Senator C. William Nelson and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee in Miami
March 4, 2011

Audience member. Fired up!

The President. Fired up! Hello, Miami!

Audience member. Yes, we can!

The President. Yes, we can. I am so pleased to be here in the Sunshine State. First of all, part of the reason I'm happy to be here is because I've got a great friend, you've got a great friend, one of the finest Senators in the United States Senate, Bill Nelson is here.

And although she comes from far away, you should know that she is working for working people and veterans and teachers and students all across the country: We are so proud of Patty Murray of the great State of Washington. Give Patty Murray a big round of applause.

And in addition, one of the newest Members of Congress, Frederica Wilson is here. Where's that hat? Where's that hat? There she is.

It is nice to be back in sunny Florida. I wish I could stay for the weekend.

Audience members. Stay! Stay! Stay!

The President. You think? You think?

Audience member. Yes, you can! [*Laughter*]

The President. You know I want to stay, but if Michelle found out that I stayed in Miami—[*laughter*]—and didn't bring her along, I'd be in trouble. So I've got to go home tonight. But I have the sneaking suspicion I'm going to be back down here one or two times over the next couple years.

Now, I realize this is a Democratic event. And there are going to be times when we're among family, we're among Democrats, where we want to talk about being Democrats. But today I want to talk to you a little bit about being an American. I want to talk about those things that bring us together, as opposed to the things that drive us apart.

And I just came from visiting the students and teachers at Miami Central High School, the Rockets. State champions in football. I saw some of the football team; they were huge. [*Laughter*] What are you all feeding these people down here? [*Laughter*] I mean, they were big.

But I was there with former Governor Jeb Bush.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. No, no, no, now. [*Laughter*] I know this is not a name you often hear at Florida Democratic fundraisers. [*Laughter*] But even though Governor Bush and I disagree on a range of issues, we agree on the importance of education to America and the need to reform our schools. And what we saw together at Miami Central was pretty inspiring. I mean, keep in mind, more than a decade ago this is a school that scored a D on State exams in its first 5 years, an F in its second 5 years. One of the buildings was called the Fish Bowl because it would always flood. And only a third of the students said they felt safe at school.

And for years, there's been a fight in Washington about how do you fix schools like this. And there are thousands of them across the country. And there are some folks in our party that said, "Well, all you need is just to put more money in there." And then there were others who said, "It's all about trying to blame the teachers, money didn't matter." And then there were others who just thought, "You know what, a situation like Miami Central is hopeless; we should just give up on those kids and focus on places where you've got a stronger foundation."

But then something happened. It was fascinating to watch—as I was talking to community members and parents and teachers—suddenly, everybody decided, you know what, we're not going to allow the school to fail any longer. And so you had parents and alumni who rushed in and started setting up mentorship programs. And you had teachers who decided, you know what, we are going to buckle down and raise our game. And you had a new principal who said, I've got high expectations for everybody. And then you had business leaders and community members who started putting in money and setting up after-school programs and Saturday programs and all kinds of extracurricular activities. And you had students who said, we are not going to allow this school to close.

And so they started making sure that there were outstanding school leaders and outstanding teachers in every classroom. They brought in math and science coaches to support their teachers. They started a parent academy to make sure that parents were actively engaged in their child's education, because we all know that responsibility begins at home.

All this happened because the community wasn't afraid of reform. And now, although Miami Central is still facing its share of challenges, over the past 5 years their performance has skyrocketed. I wanted to make sure I get this right: increased their math scores by more than 60 percent; their writing performance by more than 40 percent; graduation rates went from 36 percent to 63 percent. Right? This is a 90-percent minority school in a low-income area performing in a high level and on their way to perform even higher.

And I tell this story because making this kind of progress isn't easy, but it's proof that it's possible. It's proof that it's possible. It's still possible for us to tackle tough problems in a constructive way. We don't have to be calling each other names. It doesn't have to be an ideological battle each and every time. Every once in a while common sense can prevail. We can make some decisions not on behalf of power or money or self-interest, but because it's the right thing to do. Every once in a while that can still happen. Every once in a while it's still possible to do big things by working together.

Now, part of the reason we're all here is because we intend to win the next election. We believe in our vision for the future. There's nothing wrong with wanting to win. [*Laughter*] We wouldn't be involved if we didn't think we had better ideas.

But each of us who wants to serve the public also has a responsibility that goes beyond winning elections. We have a responsibility to future generations. And that's especially true during challenging times.

In a world that's more competitive and more connected than ever before, the biggest contest we face is not between Democrats and Republicans, it's between the United States and our workers and our businesses and our economy and our competitors around the world. If we want the new jobs, if we want the new businesses investing right here in the United States of America, then we've got to make sure that America is the best place to do business. That means we've got to have the best schools and the best trained workers. We've got to have a commitment to science and technology and invest in basic research. We need the best roads and the best runways. And yes, we could use some faster trains and Internet connections. That, by the way, has bipartisan support, I understand, here in the great State of Florida. Just a little editorial there. [*Laughter*] But we need it to move people, goods, and information as fast as possible. We've got to outeducate, we've got to outinnovate, we've got to outbuild, we've got to outhustle our competitors.

Now, there are folks in Washington who are saying we can't afford to make these investments because of the tough fiscal situation that we're in. Look, we understand the tough situation we're in. Patty, Bill, they understand the tough fiscal situation we're in. And if I recall, the last time we had a balanced budget, who was President?

Audience members. Clinton!

The President. All right, okay. I mean, I just wanted to—[*laughter*].

So we understand fiscal responsibility. We've got to get serious about our deficits. I said so

when I was running for President, and I say so today. That's why I introduced a budget that would freeze domestic spending for 5 years. It would bring annual domestic spending down to the lowest level since Dwight Eisenhower was President. That means since most of you were not alive—[*laughter*]—most of you. [*Laughter*] I'm not naming names. [*Laughter*] It will bring our deficit down by more than $1 trillion over the next decade—$1 trillion dollars.

So I am absolutely committed to working to get our deficit under control. I don't want to be facing Malia and Sasha 20 years from now, my grandchildren, and them saying, "Gosh, Dad, you really didn't take care of business." [*Laughter*] "We're feeling bad about all this debt that we're having to pay off because you weren't on the job." I know Bill feels the same way; Patty feels exactly the same way. I am willing to cut whatever spending we can't afford. What I'm not willing to do is to cut back on the basic investments that are going to allow us to win the future. I'm not willing to do that. I'm not willing to cut back on education. I'm not willing to cut back on science and technology and innovation. I'm not willing to cut back on infrastructure. We need those things to win the future of America.

You know, folks talk about if we don't rein in our deficits, then we'll mortgage our future. They're right about that. But there's more than one way to mortgage your future. If we're shortchanging our commitment to education, our commitment to those kids that I met at Miami Central, then we're mortgaging our future. If we're sacrificing our commitment to research and development, the product—the results of which led to GPS and led to the Internet and led to computer chips—if we're not making those investments, we are mortgaging our future.

If we refuse to invest in our crumbling roads and bridges and the ports and airports; if we settle for a world where China now suddenly has the fastest trains, Singapore has a nicer airport—what happened? America used to have the best stuff. We used to have the best roads, the best bridges, the best ports, the best airports. We don't oftentimes in a lot of places. But we can. It's a matter of us making good decisions and investing in our future. There's more than one way to mortgage our future. And I refuse to let that happen.

And here's the other point: These investments have traditionally been nonpartisan. I mean, think about it. My favorite Republican, Abraham Lincoln, he happens to be from my home State, but he was a pretty good President, last I checked. He was a guy who invested in the interstate—in the intercontinental railroad and in land-grant colleges and in the National Academy of Sciences in the middle of the Civil War. That's how important he thought these investments were. This is at a time when he was scrambling to figure out how to finance a war that might split the Union, and yet he was still making these investments. That's how important it was.

When Dwight Eisenhower decided, after having won—helped to win World War II and came back as President, obviously, this was a guy who was pretty concerned about the well-being of America, had made quite a bit of sacrifice. What did he decide to do? He said, part of what we have to do is we've got to invest in the Interstate Highway System, and we've got to invest in math and science all across this country. Because he understood that's how you win the future.

I believe we can find common ground. I believe that we can have a government that lives within its means without sacrificing that future for our kids. And to do that we're going to have to compromise. Each side is going to have to give a little bit. Everybody is not going to get everything they want. And I have to say that to Democrats sometimes. [*Laughter*] I know everybody gets frustrated sometimes. Over the last couple of years, well, you know, yes, you got health care done, but I don't know, I had this provision in there that didn't quite make it; or yes, we were able to make sure that we ended "don't ask, don't tell," but what took you so long? You know who you are.

Audience member. It's okay, we're good now, so sorry. [*Laughter*]

The President. But here's the thing. The American people want us to work together.

They want us to make progress. I'm proud that Democrats and Republicans joined forces in December to cut taxes for every American on their payroll taxes and allowed businesses to accelerate investment, because we need to spur growth. And we're starting to see the results. This last jobs report that just came out today: 220,000 new jobs; unemployment rate down below 9 percent, the lowest it's been in 2 years. We're moving in the right direction. But part of that was because we were able to make some commonsense decisions. And you've got a couple of commonsense people up here. These are folks who understand our job is to get stuff done for the American people.

Now, we know there's a lot more work to do. There are still millions of Americans who don't have work. Here in Florida there are hundreds of thousands of folks who are still worried about losing their home. And obviously, the housing market really got socked here in Florida. So we've got more work to do. But we have an opportunity to keep building on our momentum. And the only way we're going to do that is by working together, just like we did last December. And that's the spirit we need right now.

In the coming months, we're going to have a choice. We can allow ourselves to be consumed by the same kind of small-bore politics that's held us back before. We can allow gridlock and stalemate to prevail. We can focus on what the other side is saying about the other. [*Laughter*] Or we can focus on what they're saying about me. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I know you do. [*Laughter*]

Or instead, we can focus on what it takes to win the future. For as difficult as these times may be, the good news is that the future of America still looks bright.

I've seen it in the eyes of the students at Miami Central. I saw it in a small-town company in Wisconsin that's putting hundreds of people to work making energy-efficient lighting. I've seen it up in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. This is as a remote a place as you can be; 20,000 people in this town of Marquette, Michigan, up in the Upper Peninsula, above Canada. It kind of—you know, Michigan kind of goes up. And because the school had set up the Internet system, a wireless system, and then allowed businesses to use it, you've got the local family-owned department store that is selling two-thirds of its goods online and is now one of the 5,000 fastest growing companies in America because of investments that were made in the Internet.

I went out to Pacific Northwest to Intel out in Oregon, and I watched us making magical progress in terms of computer chips, chips that were this big that used to require an entire mainframe the size of this room to contain the same amount of information. That's being created right here in the United States of America.

We still have the best universities on Earth. We've got the best workers, the most productive workers on Earth. We've got the most entrepreneurial spirit on Earth.

We are constantly willing to adapt and change. We've got the greatest freedoms on Earth. We've got the diversity that is the hallmark of this 21st century. And no place represents that more than the Sunshine State.

So we've got what it takes to create more jobs. We've got what it takes to create more businesses. We know what it takes to win the future. We've just got to have the political will to make it happen.

We've got to be fired up. We've got to be ready to go. And so if you are willing to stand with us, if you're willing to stand with Bill Nelson and Frederica and Patty, if you're willing to stand with Barack Obama one more time, I've got no doubt that we will win the future and that future will be bright.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:44 p.m. at the Fountainebleau Resort. In his remarks, he referred to David Rodriguez, former principal, Miami Central High School in Miami, FL; and former President William J. Clinton.

Remarks at a Dinner for Senator C. William Nelson and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee in Miami
March 4, 2011

Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody. Everybody have a seat. We're among friends here. We don't have to stand on ceremony.

Let me begin by just thanking Michael and Judy and the whole Adler clan for their incredible friendship and support and hosting us in this elegant setting. I was just in Michael's study—I assume it was Michael's because it had only golf stuff in there. [*Laughter*] And I think it was a testament to what an extraordinary contribution this family has made to the country and to the State of Florida and the Democratic Party that there was a wonderful picture of Joe Biden—black hair—[*laughter*]—hair—[*laughter*]—and—but the picture was with Michael's dad, who was a great friend of Joe's. And what's continued during that time, I think, is a friendship not only between Michael and the Vice President, but Michael and Judy and myself, who were early supporters of mine when I was still running for the United States Senate. Their kids, and now grandkids, are just wonderful folks. Their mom is extraordinary. And so please, everybody, give them a big round of applause.

We also have with us two of the finest Senators that I know—one of them who hails from the wonderful State of Washington. Some of you remember she got elected as the soccer mom in tennis shoes. She basically looks the same as when she got elected. I don't know if she's still wearing tennis shoes, but I can tell you I campaigned with her back in Washington State last time, and the connection that she's able to make with folks who just inherently understand she's looking out for them, she trusts—they trust her. They know that she's one of them. She brings that spirit to the Senate every day. Patty Murray, we're thrilled that she is here.

And my dear friend Bill Nelson, who—being a great United States Senator is only the second greatest thing that he's ever done. Actually, it is the third greatest thing he's ever done. The first was marrying Grace and having those wonderful kids. The second was being in space, which is very cool. And the third is representing Florida each and every day in an outstanding fashion. Please give Bill a big round of applause.

And finally, one of the great stars of the party, somebody who, if I'm in a foxhole, I want her there with me, because—you're wonderful too—[*laughter*]—but I was referring to somebody who's just doing a great job each and every day in the House of Representatives, Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

Anyway, look, you guys are friends, so I'm not going to give a long speech. I want to talk to you a little bit about where I think we are as a country and where we need to go and why Florida is going to be so important.

We've gone through a little over 2 years of the toughest economy that we've seen in this country since the 1930s. And I think that most of us here are so blessed and so fortunate that although we've worried about the economy, we maybe haven't felt its full impact. But when you travel around the country, there are millions of people who are still out of work, hundreds of thousands of folks who are worried about losing their home, young people who wonder if they can still afford college. It's been a tough time.

And what's remarkable is not how frustrated people have been, or in some cases, how angry people have been. What's remarkable is actually how resilient people have been. I could not be prouder of the American people, because through extraordinary hardship the overwhelming majority of people have continued to be great parents and great neighbors, great coworkers, great teachers, great firefighters, great police officers, great small-businesspeople. Through thick and through thin, they've continued to contribute to their communities and coach Little League and participate in the important issues of the day. And now what we're seeing is that having gone through the

toughest time in recent memory, the country is on the rebound. The country is on the move.

We got a jobs report today that showed that unemployment has dropped to its lowest level in 2 years. We have seen 15 consecutive months of private sector job growth. The unemployment rate now is below 9 percent, and the trendlines are good. And part of that has to do with the efforts of people like Bill and Patty and Debbie, to be able to, during the lame duck session, shape a piece of legislation that cut taxes for everybody through the payroll tax cut, helped businesses to make sure that they could invest in the future. And that has put our economy on a steady growth mode that I believe is going to continue for several years.

But—and here's a big but—even before this recession, we had a lot of problems in this economy that were structural in nature. We had some long-term challenges that had been kicked down the road time and time and time and time again. We still have too much dependence on foreign oil. We still have underinvestment in our infrastructure. We still have a—what used to be a massive and consistent investment in research and development and science and technology that had declined over the last several years.

And we still aren't doing a good enough job educating our kids. We used to have the highest college graduation rates in the world; we don't have that anymore. We rank 15th and 21st in math and science when you compare us to other countries in the world.

And so we understood that we've got a lot of work to do, and we also understood that we're doing this all in the midst of recovery from a recession that has really blown a hole through the Federal budget and through State budgets, which makes it all the more difficult for us to tackle these big challenges.

But what I have been talking about since the State of the Union, what I talked about here in Florida and what I know Bill is talking about and Debbie is talking about and Patty is talking about is that for all these challenges, I'm confident that if we make good choices now, we're going to meet these challenges not just for the short term but for the long term.

We just—I went over to this school, Miami Central High School; State champs in football, which—the football team was there, and they were very big. They were very large. [*Laughter*] And Donna Shalala was there, and she said it was to help promote education policy, but secretly, I think, she was doing some recruiting still for the Hurricanes. [*Laughter*]

But that's not the reason we chose this school. This is a school that a decade ago had a 36-percent graduation rate. A third—only a third—of the students said they felt safe when they were at school. There was one room at the school called the Fish Bowl because it flooded so consistently. On the State exams, it got F's and D's for 10 consecutive years. And this school, because of a vibrant principal and because of school reform efforts, both at the State level, but also assistance from the Federal level, has now transformed itself.

It's now got a 63-percent graduation that's moving up. We went into a science lab where kids—almost all from minority and low-income backgrounds—were working with robots. And they had used computer programming to design the robots, and they were running around and moving, swirling, and picking stuff up. And they were explaining to me how it worked, and I was nodding, pretending like I understood what was happening. [*Laughter*]

And when you talked to these kids you said to yourself, you know what, there's no reason that we can't replicate this all across Florida and all across the country if we're able to make the wise investments that are necessary to make right now.

And so over the next several months, there's going to be a big debate in this country. And a lot of it is going to revolve around how we get our deficits and our debt under control, and that's going to be an important debate because we can't sustain the spending path that we're on.

And I've put forward a budget that says we're going to freeze discretionary domestic spending for the next 5 years. We're freezing pay for Federal workers for a couple of years. As hard-working as they are, they're going to be making some sacrifices. We're going to be

making some cuts in some programs that I think work but, frankly, right now we just can't afford them. We're consolidating the Federal Government. We're selling 14,000 unused Federal buildings that will save us huge amounts of money that we can then redirect. We're going to make some very difficult decisions.

But the tests of whether or not we emerge stronger rather than weaker over the next several months is, are we able to both make the cuts that are needed, save the money that's necessary, and then still make the investments in those kids at Miami Central, in the infrastructure of this State and States all across the country, the investments in research and development, in clean energy and biotechnology that will create the businesses and jobs for the future? Are we able to do that? That's going to be the debate.

It's not going to be a debate about whether we need to cut spending. We are going to be cutting spending. The question is, are we going to be doing it wisely, and are we going to make sure that everybody makes some sacrifices, that it is shared sacrifice? And if there's anything that the Democratic Party should be standing for, must stand for—if there's anything that my Presidency, I hope, stands for—is the notion that we're all in this together and that in good times everybody shares in opportunity and in tough times everybody shares in sacrifice. And it's not done on the backs of the poor or seniors or the vulnerable.

That's what's going to be happening here domestically. Now, obviously, internationally we've got a few things that I have to tend to as well. [*Laughter*] I don't know if you guys saw my press conference with President Calderon. The first question was, what are you going to do about the NFL strike? I said, you know what, if some billionaires and millionaires can't figure out how to divide up $9 billion, I can't help them because I've got a few other things to do.

But when you look at what's happening across the—around the world, what's happening in the Middle East is a manifestation of new technologies, the winds of freedom that are blowing through countries that have not felt those winds in decades, a whole new generation that says, I want to be a part of this larger world and I want to have some say in what happens.

Now, that's a dangerous time, but it's also a huge opportunity for us, because America is built on liberty and innovation and dynamism and technology. And all the forces that we're seeing at work in Egypt are forces that naturally should be aligned with us, should be aligned with Israel—if—if we make good decisions now and we understand, sort of, the sweep of history.

I met with a group of Jewish leaders in the White House this week, the presidents of all the major Jewish organizations, and I told them we have to be sober. We can't be naive about the changes that are taking place in the Middle East. Our commitment to Israel's security is inviolable, it is sacrosanct, but we should not be afraid of the possibilities of the future.

It does mean that we're going to have to be engaged and we're going to have to be involved and we're going to have to reach out. And there are going to be some bumps along the road.

But I'm actually confident that 10 years from now we're going to be able to look back, potentially, and say this was the dawning of an entirely new and better era, one in which people are striving not to be against something, but rather to be for something; where young people start saying, you know what, I'm not interested in tearing somebody else down, I'm interested in how I can build my country up and how I can create businesses and how I can have opportunity and find work that's fulfilling and support a family.

But I'm—we're going to have to seize that moment as well. So domestically we've gone through a lot of changes. If we are willing to make good choices now, then I think we're going to be that much stronger for it. Internationally, the world is going through huge changes, but we are perfectly poised to make the 21st century again the American century.

But all of this is going to require leadership. It's going to require a steady hand. It's going to

require hard work. And it's going to require you, because, frankly, I can't do this stuff by myself. We can't transform schools unless we've got great teachers and unless we've got great parents and community members who are interacting with and who are willing to get engaged and get involved.

I can't deliver for the great State of Florida unless I've got Bill Nelson standing by my side and I've got Debbie Wasserman Schultz on TV making my case. [*Laughter*]

I can't get reelected and make sure that we're carrying on the mandate that you gave us 2½ years ago unless I've got everybody here all in. And when I say "all in," I mean all in. I don't—you know how we operate. We don't just want your money. We want your time, we want your energy, we want your ideas. We want you passionate about this being important.

When I won the Presidency a couple of years ago, it wasn't because I was the best connected candidate. It wasn't because I had the easiest name to pronounce. [*Laughter*] The reason was because we tapped into something that wasn't just about, sort of, traditional politics; it wasn't just about, sort of, special interests and who's going to be for who because that person checked a box on this particular issue or that particular issue. It was something more substantial, I'd like to think. It had to do with a recognition that the world was changing and that we weren't going to respond to that with fear. We were going to respond to it with hope.

And that if we met this new world with confidence, if we reminded ourselves of what is best about America, which is that through all these changes, we constantly adapt better than anybody else. We may be arguing about it, we may debate about it, we may go through moments of ugliness, but eventually, we keep on thinking—moving forward. We stay young as a country. And that's what we captured during the campaign.

We've now gone through 2 tough years. And some of us are beaten down and worn out. And the last midterm obviously was very tough. And I'm grayer and looking a little older than I did. People don't say, "Oh, look at that young President" anymore. [*Laughter*] Yes, he looks like the President. He looks—[*laughter*]. But you know, in each of us I think that spirit still exists and that sense of hope still exists.

And we have good reason to be hopeful, because we've done extraordinary things over these last 2 years, because of your help. Because of your help, we yanked this economy out of what could have been a Great Depression. Because of your help, we passed a historic health care bill. Because of your help, we ended "don't ask, don't tell." Because of your help, we are making enormous progress on the education front. Because of your help, we made the largest investment in clean energy in our history. Because of your help, we have transformed our foreign policy so that America is once again respected around the world.

That's because of you. I need you to do it again. That's what tonight is all about. And I promise you this is not the last time you're going to see me here in Florida, all right? [*Laughter*] I love you guys.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:17 p.m. at the residence of Michael M. and Judith S. Adler. In his remarks, he referred to David, Matthew, and Rachel Adler, children of Mr. and Mrs. Adler; Bernyce "Bunny" Adler, mother of Mr. Adler; Grace C. Nelson, wife of Sen. Nelson, and their children Nan Ellen Dixon and C. William Nelson, Jr.; former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna E. Shalala; and President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico.

The President's Weekly Address
March 5, 2011

I'm talking with you from Miami, Florida, where I'm visiting Miami Central High School, a school that's turning itself around on behalf of its kids. I came here with Jeb Bush, former

Governor of this State, because he and I share the view that education isn't a partisan issue, it's an American issue.

But in a larger sense, this is a moment when we've all got to do what the students and the teachers are doing here: We've got to step up our game.

Our top priority right now has to be creating new jobs and opportunities in a fiercely competitive world. And this week, we received very good news on that front. We learned that the unemployment rate has fallen to its lowest level in nearly 2 years as our economy added another 222,000 private sector jobs last month.

Now, we have a lot more work to do, not just for the Americans who still don't have jobs, but for the millions more who still don't have the right job or all the work they need to live out the American Dream. But the progress we're seeing says something about the determination and ingenuity of our people and our businesses. What's also helping to fuel this economic growth are the tax cuts that Democrats and Republicans came together to pass in December and that I signed into law, tax cuts that are already making Americans' paychecks bigger and allowing businesses to write off their investments, freeing up more money for job creation.

Just as both parties cooperated on tax relief that is now fueling job growth, we need to come together around a budget that cuts spending without slowing our economic momentum. We need a government that lives within its means without sacrificing job-creating investments in education, innovation, and infrastructure.

The budget I sent to Congress makes these investments, but it also includes a 5-year spending freeze, and it will reduce our deficits by $1 trillion over the next decade. In fact, the cuts I've proposed would bring annual domestic spending to its lowest share of the economy under any President in more than 50 years.

Over the last few weeks, Members of Congress have been debating their own proposals. And I was pleased that Democrats and Republicans in Congress came together a few days ago and passed a plan to cut spending and keep the Government running for 2 more weeks. But we can't do business 2 weeks at a time. It's not responsible, and it threatens the progress our economy has been making. We've got to keep that momentum going.

We need to come together, Democrats and Republicans, around a long-term budget that sacrifices wasteful spending without sacrificing the job-creating investments in our future. My administration has already put forward specific cuts that meet congressional Republicans halfway. And I'm prepared to do more. But we'll only finish the job together, by sitting at the same table, working out our differences, and finding common ground. That's why I've asked Vice President Biden and members of my administration to meet with the leaders of Congress going forward.

Getting our fiscal house in order can't just be something we use as cover to do away with things we dislike politically. And it can't just be about how much we cut. It's got to be about how we cut and how we invest. We've got to be smart about it. Because if we cut back on the kids I've met here and their education, we'd be risking the future of an entire generation of Americans. And there's nothing responsible about that.

We've got to come together to put America back on a fiscally sustainable course and make sure that when it comes to the economy of our 21st century, our children and our country are better prepared than anyone else in the world to take it on. Our future depends on it. That's not a Democratic or a Republican challenge, it's an American challenge. And I'm confident it's one we'll meet.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:20 p.m. on March 4 at Miami Central High School in Miami, FL, for broadcast on March 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 4, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 5.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Julia E. Gillard of Australia and an Exchange With Reporters
March 7, 2011

President Obama. Well, I just want to provide a hearty welcome to Prime Minister Gillard, who I had a chance to meet during the ASEAN summit and the G–20 summit, and was immediately charmed, as I'm sure at least a good chunk of the Australian people are.

We have no stronger ally than Australia. And as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of our alliance, I think it's especially appropriate to have Prime Minister Gillard here.

I understand that you'll be speaking to a joint session of Congress, which is a high honor that is reserved for only our closest friends. And I think it's a measure of the degree to which Australians are held in such high esteem by Americans, partly because we share so much. Not only do we share a language, a commitment to democracy, a set of shared values, but I think there's also a shared sense of open spaces and a pioneer spirit. And as Prime Minister Gillard said the first time we met, it's what makes us "great mates."

We've had a very useful discussion about a wide range of issues. We began by me once again expressing on behalf of all the people of the United States our deepest condolences for those families that were reflected—affected by the terrible floods recently. We want to commend Prime Minister Gillard and her Government and all the personnel who were involved for their timely response at what is, I know, a very difficult time. And once again, we want to pledge any support that we can provide to the Australian people in this moment of hardship.

We also talked about a wide range of international issues. I'll be traveling this year to Asia once again for the East Asia Summit, and we'll be hosting in Honolulu the APEC summit. Australia and the United States have a shared interest in expanding trade in the Pacific region, in promoting clean energy, in making sure that we don't have regulatory barriers that prevent our businesses from working across our borders. And so we're very excited about the prospects of joining forces with Australia and other countries to promote growth and employment in the region.

We had a good discussion about security. And I want to once again thank the Australian people and the military families who are making such extraordinary sacrifices in Afghanistan. It is not easy. Australia is our largest non-NATO coalition member, making an extraordinary contribution day in, day out. And I want to personally thank Prime Minister Gillard for her strong endorsement of our efforts there. And we discussed the fact that 2011 is going to be a year of transition in which we, more and more, provide the assistance necessary for Afghans to take the lead in that effort.

And we had a discussion about the situation in the Middle East. And I think Prime Minister Gillard and I both share a very firm conviction that the violence that's been taking place and perpetrated by the Government in Libya is unacceptable. Australia joined with us in imposing swift and firm sanctions, comprehensive sanctions, against the Libyan Government. We continue to monitor the violence there.

I want to send a very clear message to those who are around Colonel Qadhafi: It is their choice to make how they operate moving forward, and they will be held accountable for whatever violence continues to take place there.

In the meantime, we've got NATO, as we speak, consulting in Brussels around a wide range of potential options, including potential military options, in response to the violence that continues to take place inside of Libya. In addition, we have taken the lead on a host of humanitarian efforts, and I just authorized an additional $15 million that will be provided to aid organizations that are already on the ground. And we've been coordinating with the United Nations, which now has a number of personnel on the ground as well, to make sure that people are getting the help they need and we are in a position to respond to any additional emergencies that may arise out of the situation there.

But the bottom line is, I think Australia and the United States stand shoulder to shoulder in sending a clear message that we stand for democracy, we stand for an observance of human rights, and that we send a very clear message to the Libyan people that we will stand with them in the face of unwarranted violence and the continuing suppression of democratic ideals that we've seen there.

So because of these shared values, because of the deep and longstanding relationship between our two countries, it is an extraordinary pleasure to have Prime Minister Gillard here. And I have to say that from a distance at least, she is doing an outstanding job, is a very quick study. And we look forward to, since she's a former Minister of Education, visiting a school here in Washington, DC, where we expect the smart students over there to ask all kinds of difficult questions. But I know that Prime Minister Gillard will have good answers for them.

So thank you very much. Welcome.

Prime Minister Gillard. Can I say thank you to President Obama. I am moderately terrified about how complicated these questions from students could be, but I'm looking forward to visiting a school with you.

I did want to start by saying thank you very much for the warmth of your welcome here. And I am very delighted to be addressing Congress. I know this is an honor for Australia and something that we're very, very pleased and grateful for. So thank you very much for that.

We've been talking today about the friendship between our two countries, about being "great mates," talking about the 60th anniversary of our alliance. And as I've said to President Obama, I view it as 60 years young. There is so much more to do together in the future, including cooperating as America looks at its force posture, including cooperating in our region at the East Asia Summit and beyond.

I've talked to President Obama today about preparations for the G–20, about its continuing importance in keeping a focus on growth and on jobs for the future. And we've talked about the importance of trade, both the Trans-Pacific Partnership, where, under President Obama's leadership, we are hoping at APEC to see major progress, and also the Doha round, where we are hoping to see major progress this year.

We've had the opportunity to talk about the fight in Afghanistan. It is hard, but it's something that I am very personally committed to, to seeing the mission done and to ensuring we play our part in training the Afghan National Army and bringing security to Afghanistan so that the Afghan people can lead their own security. So we've had the opportunity to talk about transition today, as well as events in the Middle East, as the President's outlined.

So it's been a very great pleasure to be here. Thank you very much for these discussions, and I know we'll cross the full range of economic discussions, of military discussions; defense cooperation, the mission in Afghanistan; public policy issues, which our nations share; education, which we'll have the opportunity to talk about at the school; climate change. We will be continuing to work together very strongly for the future.

Thank you. Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you, guys.

Q. Will the U.S. tap the SPR?

President Obama. Thank you very much.

Q. Will the U.S. tap the SPR to deal with oil prices being so high?

President Obama. Thank you very much, everybody.

Q. Will you tap the SPR?

President Obama. Thank you very much, everybody.

Q. Come on.

President's Travel to Australia

Q. Will you come to Australia, Mr. President?

President Obama. I would love to get there. I'm looking forward to a return visit to Australia. The first time I was there, I was telling the Prime Minister, I was 8 years old and had a wonderful time in Sydney. Everybody treated me wonderfully, and I hope I get a chance to get back there soon.

All right. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. A reporter referred to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR).

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at Wakefield High School in Arlington, Virginia
March 7, 2011

President Obama. Hello, everybody! Hey, guys. How are you? Good to see you. Nice to see you.

Well, the—it is wonderful to be back at Wakefield. Some of you remember I was here a couple of years ago, right? It was a year and a half ago? I know I had less gray hair the last time I was here. [*Laughter*]

We wanted to stop by because we have a very special guest here today. But before I do that, I just want to say—I'm assuming you guys are all aware that this is Ms. Fraley's birthday.

Students. Yes.

Q. Can we sing "Happy Birthday"?

President Obama. Should we sing "Happy Birthday"?

Students. Yes!

President Obama. So let's—I'll kick us off.

[*At this point, the President led the class in singing "Happy Birthday."*]

President Obama. For those of you in the back, you should know that Ms. Fraley was selected as one of the Virginia Teachers of the Year. So we're very proud of that. I was just talking to her. It turns out that she's been teaching now for 10 years. Before she was teaching, she was a journalist. So she decided to make a change and get into something useful. [*Laughter*] I couldn't resist. [*Laughter*]. I couldn't resist.

Now, for our real order of business here, we have a wonderful special guest. This is Prime Minister Julia Gillard. She has come all the way from Australia. She will be addressing a joint session of Congress, which is a very unique honor. Few heads of state get the privilege of addressing a joint session of Congress. But the reason that she's been asked to do this is because we have as close of an alliance with Australia as any country in the world. We have a shared democracy. We have shared values. Their football is a little different than ours. [*Laughter*]

But there are very few countries where we've got such a close bond and such a unique bond. And that dates back for decades. But it's also manifest today, where, for example, Australia is one of the leading coalition partners in Afghanistan, so our soldiers are fighting side by side. We cooperate on a whole range of security issues and economic issues. The reason we wanted to stop by a school was in part because Prime Minister Gillard used to be the Minister of Education in Australia. So she takes a great interest in how our young people are developing and how we're preparing them for the 21st-century economy.

So we are thrilled to have her here. Madam Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Julia E. Gillard of Australia. Thank you very much. I was saying to the President as we came here that I've been to a Washington school before, when I was in Washington and was taken to a school. It was actually a primary school, much younger children. And I was a few minutes into my address when one small boy turned to the small boy next to him and said, "Is she speaking English?" [*Laughter*] So provided all of you understand me today, I'm going to count this as a success.

But I thought I would come along today and just talk to you about Australia and actually start by asking you a few questions, a bit of a pop quiz about Australia. You're looking confident. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. You guys better be prepared.

Prime Minister Gillard. Okay, okay.

President Obama. Don't embarrass Ms. Fraley. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Gillard. We've got some Australian journalists here, so if you can't answer the questions, then I'm sure they'll be able to, so—[*laughter*].

Anybody got any idea the population of Australia, how many people? [*Laughter*] Just a guess?

President Obama. Anybody want to take a stab?

Q. Twenty-one million?

President Obama. Very close.

Prime Minister Gillard. Very close. Twenty-two million.

President Obama. Do you have, like, an iPad over there? [*Laughter*] That was pretty impressive. Good job. All right.

Prime Minister Gillard. Okay, what about size? How big is it? As big as America?

Q. As big as the United States.

Q. A little bit bigger.

Prime Minister Gillard. A little bit bigger?

Q. Oh, really?

Prime Minister Gillard. No. [*Laughter*] You're giving us a little bit of extra terrain.

Q. A little bit smaller.

Prime Minister Gillard. It's a little bit—there you go. There are only two choices: a little bit bigger or a little bit smaller. [*Laughter*]

Q. Maybe exactly the same.

Prime Minister Gillard. No, it's about 20 percent less in size than America. But 20 million people, 20 percent less in size. So that's worth knowing. Who knows anything about Australian-rules football?

Q. Ask him.

Prime Minister Gillard. You do?

Q. I've watched a little bit.

Prime Minister Gillard. You've watched a little bit? And what do you think? Pretty tough game?

Q. It's hard to understand. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Gillard. Okay. I've been trying to describe it to the President. It can be a bit hard to understand.

President Obama. She brought me an Australian football. She was kicking it in my office. [*Laughter*] Almost broke a bust of Lincoln. It was really—[*laughter*]. That's not true, guys. I'm just making that up.

Prime Minister Gillard. Handballing it in the office.

President Obama. I don't want to cause a diplomatic incident. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Gillard. We didn't break anything; we were handballing. So has anybody got a question about Australia? Yes.

Australian Vegemite Paste

Q. My family and I have been wondering this for a little while: What is Vegemite?

Prime Minister Gillard. Right. [*Laughter*] This is also a little bit of a division between the President and I. I love Vegemite, and——

President Obama. It's horrible. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Gillard. It's actually a by-product of making beer, apparently. That's how the story goes. It's a yeast paste. I'm making this sound really good, aren't I? [*Laughter*] It's black, and it's quite salty. The beginner's error with Vegemite is to put too much on a piece of bread or piece of toast. You don't put it on like jam or anything like that. You've got to do it very lightly, spread it very thinly. And it's good.

President Obama. So it's like a quasi-vegetable-byproduct paste—[*laughter*]—that you smear on your toast for breakfast. Sounds good, doesn't it? [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Gillard. But we'll get some sent over, and you can have a try. It's addictive. Once you've had some when you were small, you'll crave it when you're an adult.

President Obama. All right. Fair enough.

Prime Minister Gillard. You've got to start eating it when you're young, though. Other Australian questions? Yes.

Difference Between Australian and U.S. Schools

Q. What's the biggest difference between Australian schools and U.S. schools?

Prime Minister Gillard. The biggest difference? I think a lot of things are the same. We've got about 9,500 schools in the country, so a lot less than here, which is what you would imagine. I think the things that we study and

the way that we benchmark standards are around about the same. And one of the things we're both trying to do, so President Obama is very focused on and I'm very focused on, is making sure the schools that haven't been meeting the right national testing results are getting boosted up, because we don't want disadvantaged students falling behind.

So I think if you went to one of our schools, you'd see a classroom pretty much like this one.

Flooding in Australia

Q. How has the flooding affected education and how kids get to school?

Prime Minister Gillard. Yes, it did stop kids going to school for a while. So we had the flooding right through Queensland, and then we had the cyclone, which hit in north and far north Queensland after that. Some of the schools they brought back a few weeks late because kids couldn't get to school. The schools were flood damaged. But people are getting back into it and back into normal life now.

A lot of the schools acted as relief centers, so during the worst of the flooding. that is where people could go to pick up food supplies or to see someone who might be able to help them with emergency cash or put them in contact with a counselor if they were finding the strain of it too much. So schools were a real backbone. But kids missed a few weeks of school.

Some of the kids I talked to thought that wasn't such a bad deal—[*laughter*]—missing a couple of weeks of school. But everybody is getting back into it now.

President Obama. Now, the flooding area was about the size of Texas. Is that right? The amount of land that was covered by the floods?

Prime Minister Gillard. It was huge. We were—the comparison we were doing was a bit like France and Germany, that kind of size, so a huge area. And I had the opportunity to go up in the air and see it a few times, and just filthy floodwater, because floodwater is filthy, as far as the eye could see. And it was a sort of rolling crisis, so we had flooding in places like Rockhampton, and then it came down to some small places like Dalby and Condamine. So that was the first phase of it. And then we had those very dangerous flash floods in Toowoomba and into the Lockyer Valley that cost people a lot of—a lot of lives were lost because there was no warning. And then Brisbane, which is one of our big cities, was flooded. So we had a whole capital city closed down for a few days because of the flooding.

And then when we'd gotten through all of that, then we had a category 5 cyclone hit in the north and far north, and that caused a lot of devastation in places like Tully and Cardwell, which had been evacuated because the force of the cyclone was going to be so strong.

So it's been a tough time, but Queenslanders particularly are resilient sorts. They breed them pretty tough in Queensland, so they're getting on with it and rebuilding.

President Obama. Anybody else?

President's Travel to Australia

Q. Mr. President, when are you coming to Australia? [*Laughter*]

President Obama. You know, the—well, now——

Prime Minister Gillard. She's joined the class. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Right. I actually went to Australia. Some of you know that when I was a kid, I lived in Indonesia briefly for about 4 years. And Indonesia is sort of in the same vicinity as Australia. So when you fly—back then, at least—now there are probably more direct flights, but back then, oftentimes you had to fly through Australia. So I ended up having a chance to get to know Aussies when I was 8 years old—[*laughter*]—and—wonderful people. And very similar to Americans in the sense that—very open, very friendly. Partly because—we were talking about this earlier—they have a similar sort of frontier spirit. There's a lot of open space there, a lot of people who obviously migrated there and—some by choice, some——

Prime Minister Gillard. Some not so much.

President Obama. Some not so much. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Gillard. Early convicts. Not so much by choice. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. But—so you have a similar openness, a great—a premium on individualism and freedom. So there's a lot that binds our two countries together.

Any other questions? You guys can ask questions for me if you want. [*Laughter*]

Australian Sports

Q. Do you play basketball in Australia?

Prime Minister Gillard. Yes, we do play basketball in Australia. In fact, Secretary Duncan is over here, your Secretary of Education——

President Obama. Arne Duncan, yes.

Prime Minister Gillard. ——and he played basketball in Australia.

President Obama. Played professional basketball in Australia.

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. I was the leading scorer for 4 years.

President Obama. Were you the leading scorer in the league?

Secretary Duncan. No. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Come on, Reggie. I might have believed him. He's still got game, by the way. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Gillard. I went to a basketball game in Townsville earlier this year. They're the Townsville Crocs, so they come with a mascot, which is a man in a crocodile suit. And anything can happen when that mascot's there. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Anybody else? Don't be intimidated by these guys.

Q. How many of these Presidents can you name around the room? [*Laughter*]

President Obama. That's Lincoln. [*Laughter*] And that's Washington.

Q. You're over there, in the back.

President Obama. How's that?

Q. You're over there.

President Obama. Nice, nice. So what have you guys been talking about in AP history class?

Q. The twenties.

President Obama. The twenties?

Q. Yes.

Q. The Roaring Twenties.

President Obama. What's been the focus of the twenties, the Roaring Twenties?

Q. Jazz.

President Obama. Jazz.

Q. Prohibition.

President Obama. Prohibition. Has there been a debate in class about Prohibition?

Q. Not quite.

President Obama. All right. What prompted all of you to take AP history?

Q. Ms. Fraley, of course.

Q. She's a wonderful teacher.

Q. I love her.

President Obama. Look at all these folks sucking up to her. Good grief. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:52 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Colette Fraley, teacher, Wakefield High School; and Personal Aide to the President Reginald L. Love. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Statement on Terrorist Detention Policy
March 7, 2011

From the beginning of my administration, the United States has worked to bring terrorists to justice, consistent with our commitment to protect the American people and uphold our values. Today I am announcing several steps that broaden our ability to bring terrorists to justice, provide oversight for our actions, and ensure the humane treatment of detainees. I strongly believe that the American system of justice is a key part of our arsenal in the war against Al Qaida and its affiliates, and we will continue to draw on all aspects of our justice system, including Article III courts, to ensure that our security and our values are strengthened. Going forward, all

branches of Government have a responsibility to come together to forge a strong and durable approach to defend our Nation and the values that define who we are as a nation.

NOTE: Executive Order 13567 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks During a Tour of TechBoston Academy in Boston, Massachusetts
March 8, 2011

Hey guys! What's going on? How's everybody doing? Hello, everybody! Hello, hello, hello! Good to see you. Mark, good to see you. Nice to meet you.

So I'm not going to make a long speech right now. I've got to speak in the other room, and I hope you guys will be able to hear it.

I just want to say how proud I am of all of you. You guys are doing great in school. I want to shake some hands. I expect everybody here to keep working hard. How many seniors here? How many juniors? Sophomores? [*Applause*] All right. Sophomores. Freshmen. Okay, well, the sophomores—the juniors and the seniors, I know they're working hard because they're starting to apply to college. Sophomores, you still got a lot of time, so you guys got to stay focused. All right? All right. But I'm expecting everybody here to go to college, everybody here to succeed. And I appreciate you guys very much. I'm just going to shake as many hands as I can.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:33 p.m. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at TechBoston Academy in Boston
March 8, 2011

The President. Hello, TechBoston! Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody. Everybody, please have a seat. Everybody, please have a seat.

We are thrilled to see especially the students here today. I am grateful for the presence of a few other outstanding leaders. First of all, the great mayor of Boston, Tom Menino, is in the house. There he is over there. Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray's here. Where's Tim? Tim, good to see you. The outstanding Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, is in the house.

To all of you who are contributing to the outstanding education of these young people, I could not be prouder to be here. It is wonderful to be back in Massachusetts. Some of you may know I spent some time in school here myself. I was much younger. I had no gray hair. [*Laughter*] There were definitely no SMART Boards back then. [*Laughter*] The most exciting new technology was an electric pencil sharpener. [*Laughter*] So times have changed. You remember those? [*Laughter*] Do you know what pencils are? Do you guys use pencils?

I am so grateful to have Melinda Gates joining us here today. Of course, we all know Melinda's husband Bill, who couldn't hack it at school here, dropped out. [*Laughter*] Then he started a modest—modestly successful computer company. That was a joke, guys. [*Laughter*] Bill Gates actually created a really big company. [*Laughter*] But Melinda's a force in her own right. She is one of the world's most generous, but also effective, philanthropists, successful businesswoman, and most important for today, she has been an extraordinary leader when it comes to education reform. Microsoft and the Gates Foundation have been partners with TechBoston since it got started, and we are very grateful for their support. Proud of them.

Melinda's absolutely right, by the way. One of the things that I've benefited from in this effort to make sure our schools are working for every young person is my Secretary of Educa-

tion. Some of you might have known that Arne used to play professional basketball in Australia. He was on the Harvard basketball team, was a star there. Just the other week, he was in a celebrity basketball tournament, where he was outscored by Justin Bieber. [*Laughter*] I'm just saying. [*Laughter*] Justin's, like, about 5′2″—[*laughter*]—so please give him a hard time for that if you get a chance.

Now, we're in the middle of what we're calling Education Month at the White House, and I wanted to come to TechBoston so that the rest of America can see how it's done. You guys are a model for what's happening all across the country. And obviously, at the helm is Mary Skipper, who is doing unbelievable work.

Audience member. We love you, Skip!

The President. Love you, Skip! [*Laughter*] But also the extraordinarily talented teaching staff that is working here. I had a chance to meet a couple of the teachers, and you could just tell that they are passionate about the work that they do. So they deserve a huge round of applause.

Every day, TechBoston is proving that no matter who you are or what you look like or where you come from, every child can learn, every child can succeed, and every child deserves that chance.

Getting the best possible education has never been more important than it is right now. And that's because in today's world, a good job requires a good education. I travel all across the country. I go into factories, I go into companies, and it doesn't matter where you are working: If you do not have a good education, you are not going to be able to succeed. And that includes being on the factory floor these days, because most of the equipment is highly technical.

Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs will require a level of education beyond a high school degree, which means obviously, first of all, you can't drop out of TechBoston. That's not allowed. All right? You can't even think about dropping out. But—can't even think about it. But even after you graduate, you're going to need some additional education. And I know that TechBoston is doing an outstanding job of making sure that every student is prepared to go to college.

Unfortunately, the reality is too many students are not prepared across our country. Too many leave school without the skills they need to get a job that pays. Today, as many as a quarter of American students are not finishing high school—a quarter. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations, and America has fallen to ninth in the proportion of young people with a college degree. We used to be number one, and we're now number nine. That's not acceptable.

The most effective way to create jobs in this country is to change those statistics. There's no better economic policy than one that produces more graduates with the skills they need to succeed, to start their own businesses, to create their own Microsoft, to create new industries. And that's why reforming education is the responsibility of every single American: every parent, every teacher, every business leader, every public official, and yes, every student.

Now, it used to be that we weren't sure how to turn around failing schools. We weren't sure what worked to help struggling students. There were some folks in Washington who said all it took was more money; if we just poured more money into the school, everything would be better. Then there were others who said, no, you just got to blow up these schools; they can't work. A lot of people thought we should just give up on places like Dorchester, and they assumed that some kids just can't learn or they've got too many disadvantages. There were always some excuses for why our young people couldn't succeed.

But after awhile, parents and teachers and education reformers started to realize that maybe Washington didn't have all the answers. And I can promise you, after being there for a few years, they're on to something there. [*Laughter*] People started realizing that what's needed is not either-or, it's not either more money or more reform; it's both-and, both more money and more reform. That's what's needed.

What's needed is higher standards and higher expectations, more time in the classroom

and greater focus on subjects like math and science. What's needed are outstanding teachers and leaders like Skip who get more flexibility—I just like that name; I'm going call you Skip from now on—[*laughter*]—but education leaders who get more flexibility in exchange for more accountability.

And all those ingredients are present here at TechBoston. The students here, they get their own laptop when they walk through the door. That costs money, but it opens up a window for learning. You're required to take 4 years of math, science, and technology classes, classes like web development and entrepreneurship and even forensic science. I didn't even know what forensic science was in high school. [*Laughter*] I'm not sure I do now. [*Laughter*] But that's part of the requirement that makes this school outstanding.

The school days are longer. Classes are 60 minutes so that young people have time to actually focus and absorb the information that's being provided. And many students go to school in July and August. I usually don't get much applause from students when I point that out, but—[*laughter*]. Because this is a pilot school, Mary had the ability to hire her own staff, and the teachers here are offered training and constant support.

So those are the ingredients, and the results have been powerful. Students here come from some tough neighborhoods. Am I right? Yes. And yet the graduation rate is almost 20 points higher than the rest of the city—20 points higher. Ninety-four percent of the most recent graduating class went to college. Eighty-five percent of those students were the first in their family to do so. Your math and science scores are consistently higher than other Boston schools, and the attendance rate here is 94 percent.

So it's working. What's happening here is working. We know what works. What's required, then, to get results from any school is no longer a mystery. And that means there can't be any more excuses from anybody. As a nation, we have a moral and economic imperative to give every child the chance to succeed. And that's why I set a goal when I took office that by the end of the decade, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. We will be number one again.

Now, to achieve this goal, everybody is going to need to do their part. We need the help of philanthropists like Melinda Gates. We'll need the help of the businesses that are partnering with TechBoston. We need citizens and parents to get involved, because nothing we do in school will make much of a difference unless we instill in our kids the self-confidence and the self-discipline and the work ethic that are at the heart of success not just in school, but in life.

So some of you may have come from a tough neighborhood, but you've got some parents at home, you've got somebody at home who's nagging you and staying on top of you and saying, "You can succeed." And I'm assuming somebody who's also turning off the TV set once in a while and saying, "Put away the video games and do your homework." That has to be a critical ingredient in success.

We need to recognize that the true path to reform has to involve partnerships between teachers and school administrators and communities. And we'll need a national education policy that tries to figure out how do we replicate success stories like TechBoston all across the country.

So that's what Arne Duncan's job is, and that's what he's been doing so well over the last few years. Instead of pouring money into a broken system, under Arne's leadership, what we've done is we've launched a competition. We call it Race to the Top. We call it Race to the Top, and it's basically a challenge to States and school districts: Prove to us that you're serious about reform. We've said to all 50 States, if you show us the most innovative plans for improving teacher quality and improving student achievement, then we'll show you the money. And for less than 1 percent of what America spends on education each year, Race to the Top has led over 40 States to raise their standards for teaching and learning, standards, by the way, that were developed not in Washington, but by Republican and Democratic Governors all across the country.

So at the grassroots level, at the State level, standards were developed. And we said, show us how you're going to meet these standards. The more innovative you are, the more money you can get for your schools. And that's the kind of bottom-up approach that we need to follow. This year we're going to have to work with Congress to fix No Child Left Behind, and we're going to have to replace it with a law that does a better job focusing on responsibility and reform and, most of all, results.

We're also trying to give school districts more flexibility to open charter schools and pilot schools like TechBoston, so that they have the flexibility, the autonomy, to do what's best for students. We're working to make sure every school has a 21st-century curriculum like you do. And in the same way that we invested in the science and research that led to the breakthroughs like the Internet, I'm calling for investments in educational technology that will help create digital tutors that are as effective as personal tutors, educational software that's as compelling as the best video game. I want you guys to be stuck on a video game that's teaching you something other than just blowing something up.

And because we know that the single most important factor in a student's success after their parent is the person standing at the front of the classroom, we are looking to make teaching one of the most honored professions in our society. In South Korea, teachers are known as nation builders. That's what they're—that's how they're described. Here in America, it's time we treated the people who educate our children with the same level of respect. We've got to lift up teachers. We've got to reward good teachers. Of course, we also have to stop making excuses for bad teachers. We're also working to give educators the support and the preparation that they need, and I know that some of the teachers here have benefited from our investment in these programs, such as the teacher preparation partnership you have with the Boston Teachers Residency and with UMass Boston.

And with so many baby boomers retiring from teaching over the next few years, we intend to recruit and prepare a new generation of teachers, including 100,000 new math and science teachers over the next decade. And I hope that some of you will end up going into the teaching profession and pass on all the knowledge that you've gotten here at TechBoston.

Now, I've talked about how much we can improve student achievement through various reforms: setting higher standards, higher expectations; giving schools and teachers more flexibility in exchange for greater accountability. But it's also true that fixing our schools will cost some money. Recruiting and rewarding the best teachers costs money. Making it possible for families to send their kids to college costs money. Making sure that some of the state-of-the-art equipment that all of you were working on when I walked into Mr. Louis's classroom today, that costs money.

Making these investments in education is going to be absolutely critical, but it's tough to do after decades of deficits. I understand that. For too long, the Government has been spending more money than it's been taking in. So we're going to have to get serious about cutting whatever spending we don't need, which means I've already called for a 5-year freeze in our annual domestic budget. That's a freeze that would cut the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade, and it would bring such spending to a lower share of our economy than it's been in 50 years. And I've proposed cutting or eliminating more than 200 Federal programs that aren't working as well as they should. We're freezing the salaries of hard-working civil servants for 2 years. And I'm willing to do more to get our deficits under control. And that's why the White House is leading bipartisan meetings with Members of Congress, because we need to come up with a budget that forces Government to live within its means.

But—and I want everybody to pay attention—even as we find ways to cut spending, we cannot cut back on job-creating investments like education. We cannot cut back on the very investments that will help our economy grow and our Nation compete and make sure that

these young people succeed. There's nothing responsible about that. There's nothing responsible about cutting back on our investment in these young people.

I mean, think about what happens in your own family. If you have a family member that loses a job or you have an illness in the family and you've got to cut back, where do you start? You maybe give up a vacation. You go out to eat less often. Maybe you don't buy that new coat you thought was sharp or the new car that you thought you needed. But the last thing you do is give up saving on your child's education, because you know that's the key to that child's success in life.

Well, what's true for a family has to be true for the larger American family. A budget that sacrifices our commitment to education is a budget that sacrifices our country's future. It is a budget that sacrifices our children's future, and I will not let it happen. I will not let it happen. We're not going to give up on any school in America or any child in America.

We can't forget that every year, schools like TechBoston have to hold a lottery because there just aren't enough spaces for all the students who want to go here. The reason they want to go here is because they know that if they go to some of the other schools in the area, they won't do as well. They know that they might drop out. They might not get the same reinforcement that they need. There might not be that same culture of excellence and performance. That means they may not go to college, and they know they may not succeed.

All of that shouldn't depend on a lottery. That can't be the system of education we settle for in America. No child's chance in life should be determined by the luck of a lottery. Not in this country. This is a place where everyone gets the chance to succeed, where everybody should have a chance to make it. The motto of this school is, "We rise and fall together." Well, that is true for America as well. That's true for America as well.

If we want to prosper in the 21st century and if we want to keep the American Dream alive in our time, then we're going to rise together. We've all got to come together. We've got to give our children the same world-class education that you are getting right here at TechBoston. And as long as I am President, that's what I'm going to be fighting for right alongside you.

Thank you so much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:44 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Melinda French Gates and William H. Gates III, cochairs, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; musician Justin D. Bieber; and Mary E. Skipper, principal, and James Louis, teacher, TechBoston Academy.

Statement on the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day
March 8, 2011

On this 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, we celebrate the extraordinary gains made by women over the past century and the women pioneers who made them possible, and we reaffirm our unwavering support for the rights, security, dignity, and opportunity of all women around the world. Today reminds us that across countries and cultures, people everywhere, women and men, share rights and aspirations that are universal, among them the freedom to chart their own destiny, to raise their children free from violence, and to live in societies that value their voice and respect their will.

History shows that when women and girls have access to opportunity, societies are more just, economies are more likely to prosper, and governments are more likely to serve the needs of all their people. That is why my administration has stood up for gender equality and women's empowerment around the world and demanded an end to sexual and gender-based violence. It's why we're developing a plan to promote women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention and resolution in war-torn

societies. And it's why we are working to advance these goals and our national interests by strengthening the role of women in every aspect of our foreign policy. In the United States and around the world, we will not rest until our mothers, sisters, and daughters assume their rightful place as full and equal members of a secure, prosperous, and just world.

Statement on Senate Passage of Patent Reform Legislation
March 8, 2011

Creating new jobs and new opportunities in a fiercely competitive world demands policies that encourage and support American innovation and ingenuity. So I'm pleased that, on a bipartisan basis, the Senate has passed the most significant patent reform in over half a century. This long-overdue reform is vital to our ongoing efforts to modernize America's patent laws and reduce the backlog of 700,000 patent applications, which won't just increase transparency and certainty for inventors, entrepreneurs, and businesses, but help grow our economy and create good jobs. I want to thank Senators Leahy, Grassley, and Hatch for their leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with the House of Representatives to pass patent reform legislation I can sign into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 23.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
March 8, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication stating that the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared on March 15, 1995, is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2011.

The crisis between the United States and Iran resulting from the actions and policies of the Government of Iran has not been resolved. The actions and policies of the Government of Iran are contrary to the interests of the United States in the region and continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Iran and maintain in force comprehensive sanctions against Iran to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
March 8, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Fundraiser in Boston, Massachusetts

March 8, 2011

Thank you, Boston! Yes, we can! Thank you so much. Everybody, please have a seat. Have a seat. Ed Markey, thanks for your extraordinary service, and thanks for the very kind introduction. There are a few other people I want to make sure to introduce. First of all, our chief host, the outstanding mayor of this great city of Boston, Tom Menino. We've got Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray in the house as well. State Senate President Therese Murray is here; the DCCC chairman, Steve Israel; somebody who has been just an extraordinary partner for me over the last several years, somebody who's going to go down as one of the greatest Speakers in our history, Nancy Pelosi. And also, I've just got to point out, even though she's going to blush and wave me off, a dear friend, somebody who I've just come to love, Vicki Kennedy is here. And thank you to the museum for this spectacular setting.

We have had quite a wild ride over the last 2 years. Many of you were early supporters of Nancy's, early supporters of mine. Back in 2008, we were absolutely convinced that the country was moving in the wrong direction, and we had a vision to make it right.

And when I first was sworn into office, I think a lot of us still did not fully understand the magnitude of the difficulties that this country was going to be going through. We lost 4 million jobs in the 6 months before I was sworn into office and another 4 million before any of our economic policies had a chance to be put into place. And so when the rubble had cleared, when the dust had settled, this country was going through as tough a time economically, as tough a time financially, as any period since the 1930s. And it meant that we had to make a series of quick decisions and oftentimes very unpopular decisions. And in that circumstance, there would have been an enormous temptation to resort to the expedient, to look at the polls, to put your finger out to the wind, and to put political security over America's long-term security.

And nowhere was that more true than in the House of Representatives. All right? I mean, this museum is filled with artifacts of America's history. And as many of you know, the theory has always been, the Senate is the saucer that cools the passions of the polity, and the House of Representatives, well, it's boiling hot all the time. And because when you're running for the House of Representatives you get a 2-year term, you are very vulnerable to the spikes, the ups and downs of politics at any given moment.

And that's why when I say I think Nancy's going to go down as one of our finest Speakers, when I say publicly thank you to an Ed Markey or a Steve Israel, I mean what I say. Because over the last 2 years, not only were we able to yank this economy out of a recession, not only were we able to get the economy growing again so that over the last 15 months, we've seen the private sector add jobs, not only were we able to help States and cities—and I think Mayor Menino will swear by the fact that all the work we did with the Recovery Act made a huge difference in terms of putting people back to work here in Boston and in the region on construction jobs and making sure that teachers weren't laid off and police officers and cops were still doing their jobs—but under Nancy's leadership, we were able to achieve historic health care legislation that over the next 10, 15, 20 years will end up benefiting millions of families all across the country and give them the kind of security that they could never imagine without it.

We were able to get "don't ask, don't tell" repealed. We were able to expand our investments in clean energy. We were able to make sure that we had the largest investment in infrastructure since Dwight Eisenhower. We were able to make sure that we had the largest investment in education. We expanded Pell grants to provide access to our kids—for our kids to their college educations.

So we didn't just rescue the economy, we put it on a stronger footing for the future. And

along the way, we saved the auto industry and a few other things. [*Laughter*]

On foreign policy, we kept a promise to end combat in Iraq. And by the end of this year, our troops will be coming home. We put a plan in place to make sure that we begin transitioning in Afghanistan so that Afghans take the lead and that our young people are not the only ones carrying the burden of freedom in that region.

A busy docket, a lot on our plate, but leaders like Steve and Ed and Nancy were able to make that happen.

Now, here's the good news: Because of these historic efforts, we are now turning the corner. We saw last week's job report. We saw today confidence among small businesses the highest level that it's been in 3 years. We can feel in pockets across the country the economy getting stronger. Not as strong as it needs to be—there's still millions of folks out there who are out of work, hundreds of thousands of people who are worried about losing their homes—but you can feel a sense of growing optimism, at least in the short term.

But Steve, Ed, Nancy, they didn't run, they didn't make all the sacrifices that they've made just for the short term, because we had problems even before this financial crisis. We're looking towards the long term. And it's the long-term battle for the heart and soul of this country that we're going to be fighting over the next couple of years.

I just came from a wonderful school with Mayor Menino, TechBoston in Dorchester. And what a spectacular turnaround we're—we've seen in this school. I mean, you've got kids from a tough neighborhood who were working on—what was it?—a spectrophotometry. And they were doing experiments in light spectrums, and they were explaining this and that and the other, and we were nodding our heads pretending like we understood what they were talking about. [*Laughter*]

Eighty-five percent of these kids are now intending to go to college. And the reason for this change is, first, a wonderful founder and principal of this school, who's recruited these extraordinary teachers. The Gates Foundation chipped in. You've got companies from around the region that have gotten involved. They're focusing entirely on math and science and technology, although I was also in an AP Government class, where they were asking me about a wide range of Supreme Court decisions.

You could not be more impressed with the quality of these kids and the quality of the teaching, and you walked in the classroom and you could just feel, this is a place where kids are learning.

Now, money alone was not enough to make that happen. So it's absolutely critical, if we're going to change our schools so that our kids can compete in the 21st century, that we're reforming those schools as well. And we can't just settle on the status quo.

But money made a difference. Every kid in that school has a laptop, and when we went into that science lab, they were all on Google Science because, as they explained to me, a lot of the Internet information is not accurate, and so they've got to go to this particular site in order to get the best information. And those laptops cost money. These kids are—have a longer school year and longer days. Each class is 60 minutes long so that they can absorb all the information that they net—that they need. And some of them stay in school in July and August to make sure that they're keeping up. That costs money.

So we as a country are going to have a series of decisions that we've got to make not just over the next 2 years, but over the next 10 years, over the next 20 years, about what our priorities are, what our values are. Now, we've been living beyond our means as a country for too long, and we're going to have to make some tough decisions about getting rid of programs that don't work, about revamping Government. Some of that will be painful. There will be some occasions where Democratic constituencies aren't happy with us because we're having to rationalize Government. But it's necessary.

But we've got to make sure that in that process of living within our means and driving down the deficit and driving down the debt,

that we continue to invest in the American Dream, that we continue to invest in our kids, that we make sure that every young person in America is going to get the best quality education, are going to be going to college, are going to be able to get a good job at the end of it.

We're going to have to make an investment to make sure that research and development, the cutting-edge technologies that drive our economy, continue to happen right here in Boston. You go over to MIT, you go over to Harvard, and they'll be the first ones to tell you, if we don't have Federal research grants, a lot of the work we do is not going to happen. And if it's not happening there, then all those biotech firms, all those medical advances aren't going to be taking place here or along Route 128.

We're going to have to invest in infrastructure. I've been preaching this, and I know that I'm preaching to the choir when I talk to the mayor. We used to have the best stuff: best airports, best roads, best bridges, best ports. We don't anymore. Anybody who's gone through Beijing airport or ridden on a train in Europe, you know that we don't have the best infrastructure. We're way behind countries like South Korea in broadband and wireless. That's not a recipe for the future.

And so part of our argument, part of why it is so important for Nancy and Ed and Steve to have you as allies over the next several years—this is not a matter of power, it's not a matter of who's up and who's down in Washington. This has to do with whether the decisions we make now ensure the American Dream is strong and vibrant for the next generation and the generation after that. That's what's at stake.

I do not want us to look back 20 years from now and say, you know what, this is—this was the moment when we started thinking small instead of thinking big; when we started to turn on each other instead of coming together; where we decided, you know what, there's only so much, and so the job of politics is making sure that the haves have—keep their stuff and keep the have-nots at bay. That's not an America that I envision for Malia and Sasha. That's not the America that you envision for your kids and your grandkids. And so we're going to have a lot of work to do.

Now, let me say this: I was with—after—while I was at TechBoston, what we've been doing is going around the country and organizing forums with young people. And we had college Democrats and college Republicans and other college leaders, because we just want them to be involved. My theory is, you get young people involved in civic life, you get young people involved in politics, something good's going to come out of it. That's my belief.

And what was interesting, first of all, was how smart and civil they were to each other. So I was thinking about maybe sending them up to—[*laughter*]—Capitol Hill to see if we could learn some things. But somebody asked me, how do we reinvigorate the population, the voter, after 2 very tough years, 2½ very tough years? How are we going to get them involved in the 2012 cycle when a lot of folks maybe feel disillusioned after the midterm elections? How do we recapture that magic that got so many young people involved for the very first time in 2008? And I had a series of suggestions. I said, look, if you want to get voters involved, the first thing you need to do is listen, not talk, and find out what people care about and what they're thinking about. And so much of what we call apathy is actually people just not caring about the things we think they should care about, and so we need to pay a little attention to how they're thinking. But the other thing I said to these young people is, part of the reason folks get disillusioned is because we think somehow that compromise means you're unprincipled.

We've lost that sense in our—that in a vibrant, robust democracy like this, there are going to be some vigorous arguments, and sometimes you're not going to get 100 percent of what you want. In fact, you're probably never going to get 100 percent of what you want; you're going to get 80 percent of what you want or 70 percent of what you want. And so because this is a room dominated by Democrats, I want everybody to understand that Ed, Steve, Nancy, just as they did over the last 2 years, over the next 2 years, there are going to be times where we've got to try to find com-

mon ground to solve problems. Not everything is a fight. Not everything has to be a battle to the death. There have to be times when we step back for a moment and we say, you know what, we're thinking as Americans and not as partisans.

And that too is going to be, I think, a formula for our success in 2012. Because when I'm proudest of our party it's because I think our party is a practical party. I think it's a party of common sense. It's a party whose origins are with working people, who are thinking in practical, commonsense ways. And so on a whole range of issues, I think there's nothing—there's no weakness in us trying to reach out and seeing if we can find common ground.

Now, there are going to be times where we can't. I was born in Hawaii, what can I say? [*Laughter*] I mean, I just—I can't change those facts. [*Laughter*] And in these budget battles, I mean, there are going to be some things that we will not do because we think it's wrong for the country, and we're going to have some big fights about it.

But I want to make sure everybody understands here that the choices we make now are so important for the country that we're going to have to, wherever we can, try to build consensus and make decisions based not necessarily just on short-term politics, but also what's good for the country long term. And I think that when we do that, ultimately, that will be good politics. And when people look back on this era of politics, I hope that, just as they do when they visit this museum and they see these portraits, they say, you know what, here were a group of leaders who weren't just thinking short term, but were thinking long term in this long, extraordinary experiment we've had with democracy.

So let me just close by saying this: I could not be more confident about the future of this country. And part of the reason that I'm so confident are those kids that I met at TechBoston and those college students that I met in that roundtable. But part of the reason that I couldn't be more confident is because of you.

I know a lot of the people in this room and the extraordinary contributions you've made in your own communities, starting businesses, helping on a whole range of civic efforts, and it gives me confidence to know that you are behind the DCCC and you're behind Nancy Pelosi and you're behind me. Because if we've got you behind us, I promise you we're going to keep this thing going not just for the next 2 years, but the next 2 years after that, the next 2 years after that, and we're going to be leading America into a bright and prosperous future.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:33 p.m. at the Museum of Fine Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Victoria Reggie Kennedy, wife of former Sen. Edward M. Kennedy; and Mary E. Skipper, principal, TechBoston Academy in Boston, MA. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 9.

Remarks on the Nomination of Secretary of Commerce Gary F. Locke To Be Ambassador to China
March 9, 2011

The President. Good morning, everybody. As many people know, our current Ambassador to China, Jon Huntsman, has decided to step down from his current job. During his tenure, Jon has been an outstanding advocate for this administration and for this country. He made a real sacrifice in moving his family out of the State that they loved and has helped to strengthen our critical relationship with the Chinese Government and the Chinese people. And so I am very grateful for his service.

In replacing Ambassador Huntsman, I can think of nobody who is more qualified than Gary Locke. More than 100 years ago, Gary's grandfather left China on a steamboat bound for America, where he worked as a domestic servant in Washington State. A century later, his grandson will return to China as America's top diplomat.

In the years between these milestones, Gary has distinguished himself as one of our Nation's most respected and admired public servants. As our country's first Chinese American Governor, he worked tirelessly to attract jobs and businesses to Washington State and he doubled exports to China.

Two years ago, I asked Gary to continue this work as Commerce Secretary. I wanted him to advocate for America's businesses and American exports all around the world, make progress on our relationship with China, and use the management skills he developed as Governor to reform a complex and sprawling agency.

He has done all that and more. He's been a point person for my National Export Initiative, and last year, Gary's department led a historic number of trade missions that helped promote American businesses and support American jobs. He's overseen an increase in American exports and particularly exports to China, a country we recently signed trade deals with that will support 235,000 American jobs.

As Commerce Secretary, Gary oversaw a census process that ended on time and under budget, returning $2 billion to American taxpayers. He's earned the trust of business leaders across America by listening to their concerns, making it easier for them to export their goods abroad, and dramatically reducing the time it takes to get a patent. When he's in Beijing, I know that American companies will be able to count on him to represent their interests in front of China's top leaders.

As one of the world's fastest growing economies, our relationship with China is one of the most critical of the 21st century. Over the last 2 years, we worked hard to build a relationship that serves our national interest, addressing global security issues and expanding opportunities for American companies and American workers. Continued cooperation between our countries will be good for America, it will be good for China, and it will be good for the world.

As the grandson of a Chinese immigrant who went on to live the American Dream, Gary is the right person to continue this cooperation. I know he will bring the same skills and experience that he brought to Commerce Secretary to this new position that he's about to embark on.

I want to thank him, and I also want to thank his gorgeous and extraordinary family, who's standing here, Mona, Emily, Dylan, and Maddy. It's always tough to move families. Maddy just turned 14 today, so I was commiserating——

Secretary Locke. Emily.

The President. Emily just turned 14 today. So I was commiserating with her, as somebody who moved around a lot when I was a kid, as well. I assured her it would be great 10 years from now. [*Laughter*] Right now it's probably a drag. But I'm absolutely confident that this is—we could not have better representation of the United States of America in this critical relationship than we're going to get from the Locke family.

And, Gary, I wish you all the best of luck in Beijing. Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mona Locke, wife of Secretary Locke, and their children Emily, Madeline, and Dylan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Locke.

Statement on the Observance of Ash Wednesday
March 9, 2011

Michelle and I join with millions of Christians here and across the world to mark Ash Wednesday. As we observe the season of Lent, we receive with thanksgiving this opportunity for grace and repentance, recommit ourselves to our faith, and remember our obligations to one another.

Statement on the Death of David S. Broder
March 9, 2011

Like so many here in Washington and across the country, Michelle and I were deeply saddened to hear about the passing of a true giant of journalism, David Broder. David filed his first story from our Nation's Capital before starting as a junior political writer on the 1960 Presidential election. In the decades that followed, he built a well-deserved reputation as the most respected and incisive political commentator of his generation, winning a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of Watergate and earning the affectionate title of "Dean" of the Washington press corps. Through all his success, David remained an eminently kind and gracious person, and someone we will dearly miss. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends in this difficult time.

Statement on the Situation in Cote d'Ivoire
March 9, 2011

I strongly condemn the abhorrent violence against unarmed civilians in Cote d'Ivoire. I am particularly appalled by the indiscriminate killing of unarmed civilians during peaceful rallies, many of them women, including those who were gunned down as they marched in support of the legitimately elected President Alassane Ouattara. Reports indicate that the women were shot to death by security forces loyal to former President Laurent Gbagbo. On March 8, the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, we saw pictures of women peacefully rallying with signs that said, "Don't Shoot Us," a strong testament to the bravery of women exercising their right of peaceful assembly.

The United States remains deeply concerned about escalating violence, including the deepening humanitarian and economic crisis and its impact in Cote d'Ivoire and neighboring countries. All armed parties in Cote d'Ivoire must make every effort to protect civilians from being targeted, harmed, or killed. The United States reiterates its commitment to work with the international community to ensure that perpetrators of such atrocities be identified and held individually accountable for their actions.

As we have said since the election results in Cote d'Ivoire were certified, the people of Cote d'Ivoire elected Alassane Ouattara as their President, and Laurent Gbagbo lost the election. Former President Gbagbo's efforts to hold on to power at the expense of his own country are an assault on the universal rights of his people and the democracy that the Cote d'Ivoire deserves. The people of Cote d'Ivoire have extraordinary talent and potential, and they deserve leadership that is responsive to their hopes and aspirations. It is time for former President Gbagbo to heed the will of his people and to complete a peaceful transition of power to President Ouattara.

Remarks at the White House Conference on Bullying Prevention
March 10, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Well, welcome to the White House. I want to thank Michelle for her introduction and for marrying me—[*laughter*]—and for putting up with me.

I want to reiterate what Michelle said: Preventing bullying isn't just important to us as President and First Lady, it's important for us as parents. It's something we care deeply about.

We're joined here by several Members of Congress who've shown real leadership in taking up this cause. We've got a number of

members of my administration with us today who are going to help us head up the efforts that come out of the White House on this issue. And I want to point out Judge Catherine O'Malley, the First Lady of Maryland. She is right here. Catherine, thank you for being here. Thank you all for being here. You have a chance to make an enormous difference, and you already have.

Now, bullying isn't a problem that makes headlines every day. But every day it touches the lives of young people all across this country. I want to thank all of you for participating in this conference. But more importantly, I want to thank you for being part of what's a growing movement—led by young people themselves—to put a stop to bullying, whether it takes place in school or it's taking place online.

And that's why we're here today. If there's one goal of this conference, it's to dispel the myth that bullying is just a harmless rite of passage or an inevitable part of growing up. It's not. Bullying can have destructive consequences for our young people, and it's not something we have to accept. As parents and students, as teachers and members of the community, we can take steps—all of us—to help prevent bullying and create a climate in our schools in which all of our children can feel safe, a climate in which they all can feel like they belong.

As adults, we all remember what it was like to see kids picked on in the hallways or in the schoolyard. And I have to say, with big ears and the name that I have, I wasn't immune. [*Laughter*] I didn't emerge unscathed. But because it's something that happens a lot and it's something that's always been around, sometimes we've turned our blind eye to the problem. We've said, "Kids will be kids." And so sometimes, we overlook the real damage that bullying can do, especially when young people face harassment day after day, week after week.

So consider these statistics: A third of middle school and high school students have reported being bullied during the school year; almost 3 million students have said they were pushed, shoved, tripped, even spit on. It's also more likely to affect kids that are seen as different, whether it's because of the color of their skin, the clothes they wear, the disability they may have, or sexual orientation.

And bullying has been shown to lead to absences and poor performance in the classroom. And that alone should give us pause, since no child should be afraid to go to school in this country.

Today, bullying doesn't even end at the school bell. It can follow our children from the hallways to their cell phones to their computer screens. And in recent months, a series of tragedies has drawn attention to just how devastating bullying can be. We have just been heartbroken by the stories of young people who endured harassment and ridicule day after day at school and who ultimately took their own lives. These were kids brimming with promise—kids like Ty Field, kids like Carl Walker-Hoover—who should have felt nothing but excitement for the future. Instead, they felt like they had nowhere to turn, as if they had no escape from taunting and bullying that made school something they feared. I want to recognize Ty's mom and dad, who are here today, Carl's mother and sister, who are here today. They've shown incredible courage as advocates against bullying in memory of the sons and the brother that they've lost. And so we're so proud of them, and we're grateful to them for being here today.

No family should have to go through what these families have gone through. No child should feel that alone. We've got to make sure our young people know that if they're in trouble, there are caring adults who can help and young adults that can help, that even if they're having a tough time, they're going to get through it, and there's a whole world full of possibility waiting for them. We also have to make sure we're doing everything we can so that no child is in that position in the first place. And this is a responsibility we all share, a responsibility we have to teach all children the Golden Rule: We should treat others the way we want to be treated.

The good news is, people are stepping up and accepting responsibility. They're refusing to turn a blind eye to this problem. The PTA is launching a new campaign to get resources and

information into the hands of parents. MTV is leading a new coalition to fight bullying online, and they're launching a series of ads to talk about the damage that's done when kids are bullied for the color of their skin or their religion or being gay or just being who they are. Others are leading their own efforts here today. And across the country, parents and students and teachers at the local level are talking—taking action as well. They're fighting not only to change rules and policies, but also to create a stronger sense of community and respect in their schools.

Joining this conference today is a young man I just had a chance to meet, Brandon Greene from Rhode Island. Brandon's 14 years old. Back in sixth grade, when he was just a kid, he did a class project on bullying. Now, 2 years later, it's a school-wide organization with 80 members. They do monthly surveys in their school to track bullying rates. And what they realized is that stopping bullying isn't just about preventing bad behavior, it's also about working together and creating a positive atmosphere. So Brandon and his fellow committee members are now also doing activities like coat drives and community service at their school. And it's making a real difference. So we're very proud of Brandon and the great work he's doing.

There are stories like this all across the country, where young people and their schools have refused to accept the status quo. And I want you all to know that you have a partner in the White House. As the former head of Chicago's public schools, nobody understands this issue better than my Education Secretary, Arne Duncan. He's going to be working on it, along with our Health Secretary, Kathleen Sebelius. Arne's going to head up our administration's efforts, which began last year with a first-of-its-kind summit on bullying.

And we're also launching a new resource called stopbullying.gov, which has more information for parents and for teachers. And as part of our education reform efforts, we're encouraging schools to ask students themselves about school safety and how we can address bullying and other related problems, because as every parent knows, sometimes the best way to find out what's happening with our kids is to ask, even if you have to—if it's in the case of Sasha, you have to keep on asking. [*Laughter*]

Now, as adults, we can lose sight of how hard it can be sometimes to be a kid. And it's easy for us to forget what it was like to be teased or bullied. But it's also easy to forget the natural compassion and the sense of decency that our children display each and every day, when they're given a chance.

A couple other young people that I just had a chance to meet, Sarah and Emily Buder, who are here from California, they're right here next to the First Lady. And Sarah and Emily, they read a story about a girl named Olivia in a nearby town—this is a girl they didn't know—who had faced a lot of cruel taunting in school and online because she had had an epileptic seizure in class. So they decided to write Olivia a letter and asked their friends to do the same.

They figured they'd send Olivia about 50 letters. But in the months that followed, thousands and thousands of letters poured in from every corner of the country. It really tapped into something. A lot of the letters were from young people, and they wanted to wish Olivia well and let her know that somebody out there was talking—was thinking about her and let her know that she wasn't alone. And because those children treated Olivia with that small measure of kindness, it helped Olivia see that there was a light at the end of the tunnel.

The fact is, sometimes, kids are going to make mistakes; sometimes, they're going to make bad decisions. That's part of growing up. But it's our job to be there for them, to guide them, and to ensure that they can grow up in an environment that not only encourages their talents and intelligence, but also their sense of empathy and their regard for one another.

And that's what ultimately this conference is all about. And that's why all the issues that we're talking about really matter. And that's how we're going to prevent bullying and create an environment where every single one of our children can thrive.

So thank you for the good work that you're already doing, and I'm sure you're going to come

up with some terrific ideas during the course of this conference. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Kirk and Laura Smalley, parents of Richard "Ty" Field Smalley; Sirdeaner L. Walker, mother of Carl J. Walker-Hoover; and Novato, CA, resident Olivia Gardner. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

The President's News Conference
March 11, 2011

The President. Good morning, everybody. Before I begin, I want to say a few words about the terrible earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan earlier today.

First and foremost, our thoughts and our prayers are with the people of Japan. This is a potentially catastrophic disaster and the images of destruction and flooding coming out of Japan are simply heartbreaking. Japan is, of course, one of our strongest and closest allies, and this morning I spoke with Prime Minister Kan. On behalf of the American people, I conveyed our deepest condolences, especially to the victims and their families, and I offered our Japanese friends whatever assistance is needed.

We currently have an aircraft carrier in Japan, and another is on its way. We also have a ship en route to the Marianas Islands to assist as needed. The Defense Department is working to account for all our military personnel in Japan. U.S. Embassy personnel in Tokyo have moved to an offsite location. And the State Department is working to account for and assist any and all American citizens who are in the country.

Tsunami warnings have been issued across the Pacific, and we've already seen initial waves from the tsunami come ashore on Guam and other U.S. Territories, in Alaska and Hawaii, as well as on—along the West Coast. Here in the United States, there hasn't been any major damage so far. But we're taking this very seriously, and we are monitoring the situation very closely. FEMA is fully activated and is coordinating with State and local officials to support these regions as necessary. And let me just stress that if people are told to evacuate, do as you are told.

Today's events remind us of just how fragile life can be. Our hearts go out to our friends in Japan and across the region, and we're going to stand with them as they recover and rebuild from this tragedy.

Now, before I take a few questions, let me say a few words about something that's obviously been on the minds of many Americans here at home, and that's the price of gasoline.

In an economy that relies on oil, gas prices affect everybody, from farmers and truck drivers to restaurant owners and workers, as well as consumers. Businesses see rising prices affect their bottom line. Families feel the pinch every time they fill up the tank. For Americans already facing tough times, it's an added burden.

Of course, rising prices are not a new phenomenon. Three years ago, before the recession hit, a combination of factors, including rising demand from emerging economies like China, drove gas prices to more than $4 a gallon. The worldwide recession and the decrease in demand pushed prices back down. But over the past year, as the economy has picked up steam and global demand for oil has increased, prices have increased again. Turmoil in North Africa and the Middle East has added uncertainty to the mix, and lost production in Libya has tightened supply.

Now, here's the good news. The global community can manage supply disruptions like this. Other oil-producing nations have committed to filling any gaps, and we will continue to coordinate closely with our international partners to keep all options on the table when it comes to any supply disruptions.

Here at home, everybody should know that should the situation demand it, we are prepared to tap the significant stockpile of oil that

we have in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. We're also using the resources at our disposal at the Federal level to monitor any possible manipulation in the oil markets. And I'm asking the Attorney General and relevant State—relevant agencies to work with States' attorneys general to monitor for price gouging to make sure that nobody is taking advantage of working families at the pump.

In addition, America is better prepared for supply disruptions than we used to be. Today, we use 7 percent less oil than we did in 2005, even as our economy has grown since then, partly because our economy as a whole is more efficient. We're adapting. We're producing more oil, and we're importing less. Our automakers, for example, are manufacturing more fuel-efficient cars, some that now get more than 50 miles to the gallon, and our consumers are driving more of these cars.

In December, Democrats and Republicans came together to pass a payroll tax cut that is already helping to grow our economy and create jobs. In the wake of rising gas prices, it should also help act as a cushion for working families. This doesn't lessen our commitment to do everything that we can to get gas prices down, but that tax cut will total about $1,000 for the average working family this year, or an extra $80 or so showing up in your paycheck each month. And that tax relief package is a key reason that even with these higher prices, economists and investors like Warren Buffett believe we should still expect solid growth and strong private sector job creation this year.

Now, the hard truth is, is that as long as our economy depends on foreign oil, we'll always be subject to price spikes. So we've got to get moving on a comprehensive energy strategy that pursues both more energy production and more energy conservation. We need to increase our access to secure energy supplies in the near term, and we've got to make our economy more energy efficient and energy independent over the long run.

Let me be more specific. First, we need to continue to boost domestic production of oil and gas. Last year, American oil production reached its highest level since 2003. Let me repeat that. Our oil production reached its highest level in 7 years. Oil production from Federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico reached an all-time high. For the first time in more than a decade, imports accounted for less than half of what we consumed.

So any notion that my administration has shut down oil production might make for a good political sound bite, but it doesn't match up with reality. We are encouraging offshore exploration and production. We're just doing it responsibly. I don't think anybody has forgotten that we're only a few months removed from the worst oil spill in our history. So what we've done is to put in place commonsense standards like proving that companies can actually contain an underwater spill. And oil companies are stepping up. We've approved more than 35 new offshore drilling permits that meet these new safety and environmental standards.

There is more we can do, however. For example, right now the industry holds leases on tens of millions of acres, both offshore and on land, where they aren't producing a thing. So I've directed the Interior Department to determine just how many of these leases are going undeveloped and report back to me within 2 weeks so that we can encourage companies to develop the leases they hold and produce American energy. People deserve to know that the energy they depend on is being developed in a timely manner.

We're also taking steps that will enable us to gather data on potential gas and oil resources off the mid- and south Atlantic, and we're working with the industry to explore new frontiers of production, safety measures, and containment technology. We're looking at potential new development in Alaska, both onshore and offshore. And when it comes to imported oil, we're strengthening our key energy relationships with other producer nations, something that I will discuss with President Rousseff when I visit Brazil next week.

All these actions can increase domestic oil production in the short and medium term. But let's be clear: It is not a long-term solution. Even if we started drilling new wells tomorrow,

that oil isn't coming on line overnight. And even if we tap every single reserve available to us, we can't escape the fact that we only control 2 percent of the world's oil, but we consume over a quarter of the world's oil. T. Boone Pickens, who made his fortune in the oil business—and I don't think anybody would consider him unfriendly to drilling—was right when he said that "this is one emergency we can't drill our way out of."

We can't place our long-term bets on a finite resource that we only control 2 percent of, especially a resource that's vulnerable to hurricanes, war, and political turmoil. So beyond increased domestic production, if we want to secure our long-term prosperity and protect the American people from more severe oil shocks in the future, the way to do it is to gradually reduce demand and then do everything we can to break our dependence on oil.

For example, last year, we established a groundbreaking national fuel efficiency standard for cars and trucks. It's going to save consumers money while conserving about 1.8 billion barrels of oil. And we're working with automakers, autoworkers, and States to ensure that the high-quality, fuel-efficient cars and trucks of tomorrow continue to be built right here in the United States of America.

To satisfy our broader energy needs, we're working to diversify our entire portfolio with historic investments in clean energy. Right now, all across America, our farmers are producing homegrown fuels, our scientists are looking for the next breakthroughs, and our workers are back in once-shuttered factories, manufacturing wind turbines and solar panels and advanced batteries that will help our cars get hundreds of miles to the gallon. These are jobs that didn't exist 2 years ago, and we want to create millions more of these jobs.

And in this state—this year's State of the Union Address, I set a goal for America: By 2035, 80 percent of our electricity will come from a broad array of clean energy sources, from renewables like wind and solar and homegrown biofuels, along with natural gas, clean coal, and nuclear power.

So these are just some of the steps that we've already taken to secure America's energy future. And over the course of the weeks and months ahead, we will take more. But the bottom line is this: We've been having this conversation for nearly four decades now. Every few years, gas prices go up, politicians pull out the same old political playbook, and then nothing changes. And when prices go back down, we slip back into a trance. And then when prices go up, suddenly, we're shocked. I think the American people are tired of that. I think they're tired of talk. We've got to work together, Democrats, Republicans, and everybody in between, to finally secure America's energy future. I don't want to leave this for the next President, and none of us should want to leave it for our kids.

So with that, let me take a few questions. And I'm going to start with Mr. Todd [Chuck Todd, NBC News].

Situation in Libya

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I want to go to—start with Libya. You had said that you want to see Qadhafi leave power, leave office. Are you prepared to use any means necessary in the United States Government to make that happen? And if not, why not? I know in the cases of some of these other uprisings there's been a careful consideration not to take sides, let the Libyan—let the people in those countries make this decision. But in this case, it does seem we have taken sides. So what—what's the red line here?

The President. Well, first of all, let's take a look at what we've already done. My first priority obviously was getting out American citizens and Embassy personnel out of Libya, and we got that done. The very next day, we had already instituted the largest financial seizure of assets in our history. And the day after that, we'd imposed sanctions and we had mobilized the international community through the United Nations so that across the board we are slowly tightening the noose on Qadhafi. He is more and more isolated internationally, both through sanctions as well as an arms embargo.

In addition to that, we've provided a host of humanitarian aid measures to make sure that people are not adversely affected as they cross the borders into Tunisia or Egypt. And we will continue to do that.

And what we've done is we've organized in NATO a series of conversations about a wide range of options that we can take, everything from 24-hour surveillance so that we can monitor the situation on the ground and react rapidly if conditions deteriorated, to further efforts with respect to an arms embargo, additional efforts on humanitarian aid, but also potential military options including a no-fly zone.

NATO will be meeting on Tuesday to consider a no-fly zone, and we've been in discussions with both Arab countries as well as African countries to gauge their support for such an action.

In addition, Secretary Hillary Clinton will be meeting with the opposition in the next several days, and we have determined that it's appropriate for us to assign a representative whose specific job is to interact with the opposition and determine ways that we can further help them. And so we're going to be in close consultation with them.

So the bottom line is, is that I have not taken any options off the table at this point. I think it is important to understand that we have moved about as swiftly as an international coalition has ever moved to impose sanctions on Qadhafi. I am absolutely clear that it is in the interest of the United States and, more importantly, in the interest of the Libyan people for Mr. Qadhafi to leave. And I have not foreclosed these options.

Now, I do take very seriously making sure that any decisions I make that involve U.S. military power are well thought through and are done in close consultation with Secretary Gates, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mullen, and all relevant personnel. Any time I send the United States forces into a potentially hostile situation, there are risks involved and there are consequences. And it is my job as President to make sure that we have considered all those risks.

It's also important, from a political perspective, to, as much as possible, maintain the strong international coalition that we have right now.

Q. Are you concerned that because you've called for his removal, you've imposed all these sanctions, that Qadhafi feels cornered, has no other option in his mind but to just keep fighting, keep fighting? And in the words of your Director of National Intelligence, he may have the firepower to potentially win this standoff with the rebels.

The President. I am concerned, absolutely. And I think that's why it's so important for us not to stop where we are, but to continue to find options that will add additional pressure, including sending a clear message to those around Qadhafi that the world is watching and we're paying attention and that there have been referrals to the International Criminal Court.

Part of what we're going to be wanting to do is to change the balance not just militarily inside of Libya, but also to change the balance in terms of those who are around Qadhafi and are thinking about what their future prospects are if they continue down the course that they're on.

But, Chuck, there's no doubt that I am concerned about it. Qadhafi has a stash of weapons. He not only has some troops that remain loyal to him, but there have been reports that he's also been hiring mercenaries. Even with the financial freeze that we've imposed, he still has some assets. The rebel groups are just now getting organized. And so we're going to have to continue to apply pressure, and that's why I say we have not taken any options off the table at this point.

Mimi Hall [USA Today].

Situation in Libya/Federal Budget

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Just to follow up on Libya, and I also have a budget question. You say you're concerned, but is Qadhafi staying, is that an acceptable option for you ever?

And my question on the budget is: There's been some criticism from members of your own party about your leadership on negotiations on

spending. And I'm wondering, given that, if you can talk about where you stand on a 3-week CR, on longer-term priorities, and what you would and would not accept on cuts.

The President. Sure.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Going back to the Qadhafi question, as I said before, it is in the United States interest and the interest of the people of Libya that Qadhafi leave. And we are going to do a wide—we're going to take a wide range of actions to try to bring about that outcome. When you say is it ever acceptable, I mean, I think what you're asking is, are we going to do—engage in any potential military action to make that happen. And as I've said before, when it comes to U.S. military actions, whether it's a no-fly zone or other options, you've got to balance costs versus benefits. And I don't take those decisions lightly.

But let me be as clear as I can about the desired outcome from our perspective, and that is that Qadhafi step down. And we are going to continue to work with the international community to try to achieve that, and we are going to be in close consultation with these opposition groups as they get organized to see how we can bring about that outcome.

Now, with respect to the budget, I think it's important to understand that right now the discussion is about last year's business. We're talking about how to fund the remainder of this fiscal year. This is an appropriations task. And we have been in very close contact with all Members of Congress, both parties. I've had conversations with Mr. McConnell, I've had conversations with Mr. Boehner, I've had conversations with Nancy Pelosi, and I've had conversations with Harry Reid about how they should approach this budget problem.

Here's what we know: The Republicans in the House passed a budget that has been now rejected in the Senate. They are not going to get 100 percent of what they want. The Democrats have put forward spending cuts, many of them pretty painful, that give Republicans already half of what they were seeking, because they're the right thing to do. Many of those cuts are ones that were already embodied in the budget that I proposed for 2012. Now, that's been rejected as well.

So here's what we know: that both sides are going to have to sit down and compromise on prudent cuts somewhere between what the Republicans were seeking that's now been rejected and what the Democrats had agreed to that has also been rejected. It shouldn't be that complicated. And so what I've done is, every day I talk to my team, I give them instructions in terms of how they can participate in the negotiations, indicate what's acceptable, indicate what's not acceptable. And our expectation is, is that we should be able to get this completed.

Now, because, I think, neither Democrats or Republicans were in the mood to compromise until their 100-percent maximal position was voted down in the Senate, we've probably lost some time. And we may not be able to fully resolve this and meet next week's deadline for the continuing resolution, which means that there may be potentially one more short-term extension.

But let me just make some broad points about this. Number one, we can't keep on running the Government based on 2-week extensions. That's irresponsible. I mean, I—we've got a war in Afghanistan going on. We've got a wide range of issues facing the country on a day-to-day basis. And the notion that we can't get resolved last year's budget in a sensible way with serious but prudent spending cuts I think defies common sense. So we should be able to get it done.

Point number two: There are going to be certain things that House Republicans want that I will not accept. And the reason I won't accept them is not because I don't think we've got to cut the budget; we do. And we've already put forward significant cuts in the discretionary budget, some of which have not made members of my own party happy.

But the notion that we would cut, for example, Pell grants, when we know the single most important thing to our success as a nation long term is how well-educated our kids are, and the proposal that was coming out of the House would cut this year about $800 out of Pell grants for 8 million kids and, if were extended

into next year, would cut in half the Pell grants that they're receiving, that makes no sense. The notion that we would decide that, under the Republican budget proposal, to eliminate 200,000 Head Start slots that also would mean the layoffs of 55,000 teachers, that doesn't make sense.

The principle that I've tried to put forward since the State of the Union is we've got to live within our means, we've got to get serious about managing our budget, but we can't stop investing in our people. We can't stop investing in research and development. We can't stop investing in infrastructure, those things that are going to make us competitive over the long term and will help us win the future.

And so I've communicated directly to Speaker Boehner as well as to Republican Leader McConnell that we want to work with them to get to a sustainable discretionary budget. And we think it is important for us to stop funding programs that don't work. But we're going to make sure that we hold the line when it comes to some critical programs that are either going to help us outeducate, outinnovate, or outbuild other countries.

Last point I'll make on the budget: The Republican budget that passed out of the House included a whole range of what are called riders. These aren't really budget items. These are political statements. And I want—I've said, again, directly to Speaker Boehner that we're happy to discuss any of these riders, but my general view is, let's not try to sneak political agendas into a budget debate. If Republicans are interested in social issues that they want to promote, they should put a bill on the floor of the House and promote it, have an up-or-down vote, send it over to the Senate. But don't try to use the budget as a way to promote a political or ideological agenda.

I think that's the American people's view as well. I think one of the messages that the American people have clearly sent is: Get serious about living within our means and managing our budget in a responsible way, and stop with the political bickering. And if we have that view in mind, then I think that not only can we get this short-term issue resolved, but I think we can actually solve the long-term budget issues as well.

Jake Tapper [ABC News]. Where's Jake?

Situation in Japan/Detention of Army Private First Class Bradley E. Manning

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. Experts say they can't recall a time when the U.S. ever had to rush assistance to a nuclear power plant in another country before. What can you tell us about how serious this is with the U.S. rushing coolant to Japan because of the nuclear plant there?

And then, a second question. The State Department spokesman, P.J. Crowley, said the treatment of Bradley Manning by the Pentagon is "ridiculous and counterproductive and stupid." And I'm wondering if you agree with that. Thank you, sir.

The President. On point number one, when I spoke to Prime Minister Kan, I specifically asked him about the nuclear plants and their potential vulnerability as a consequence of the earthquake. He indicated that they are monitoring the situation very closely. So far, they have not seen evidence of radiation leaks. But obviously, you've got to take all potential precautions. And I've asked Steve Chu, our Energy Secretary, to be in close contact with their personnel to provide any assistance that's necessary, but also to make sure that if, in fact, there have been breaches in the safety system on these nuclear plants, that they're dealt with right away.

With respect to Private Manning, I have actually asked the Pentagon whether or not the procedures that have been taken in terms of his confinement are appropriate and are meeting our basic standards. They assure me that they are. I can't go into details about some of their concerns, but some of this has to do with Private Manning's safety as well.

Q. Do you disagree with P.J. Crowley?

The President. I think I gave you an answer to the substantive issue.

Q. One more quick question: On the coolant, how did that happen? Why was it——

The President. I don't yet have all the details, Jake. So I'm going to have to defer that

question until we get more. Obviously, the tragedy just happened a few hours ago, and there's going to be a lot of fact-finding that we're going to have to determine.

Chip Reid [CBS News].

Situation in Libya

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like to go at the Libya thing in a slightly different way. In an interview with CBS News, Qadhafi's son Saif said the plan is "to squash the rebels with no mercy." If he follows through, if the Qadhafi regime follows through on that, can the United States simply stand by and do nothing? And I say that in light of the fact that in the past you have said there are times when a brutal government is massacring its own citizens that the United States has a moral obligation to intervene militarily.

The President. I continue to believe that not only the United States, but the international community has an obligation to do what it can to prevent a repeat of something like what occurred in the Balkans in the nineties, what occurred in Rwanda. And so part of, for example, maintaining 24-hour surveillance of the situation there is for us to have some sort of alert system if you start seeing defenseless civilians who were being massacred by Qadhafi's forces.

But obviously, we're going to have to look at what develops on the ground on a case-by-case basis. I don't want to generalize right now and say that's what's happening and we're prepared to step in. It's going to require some judgment calls, and those are difficult ones. But we have sent a clear warning to the Qadhafi Government that they will be held accountable, particularly when it comes to assaulting civilians. And some of the rhetoric that you've seen—for example, the idea that when Qadhafi said that they'd be going door to door hunting for people who are participating in protests—that implied a sort of lack of restraint and ruthlessness that, I think, raises our antenna.

But as I said before, what I've got to do is make sure that we're monitoring the situation and matching our actions with what we think will be helpful on the ground and also sustainable, and we've got to do so in consultation with the international community.

Q. Quick follow-up: Can I ask you, do you agree with your top intelligence official, James Clapper, who said before Congress yesterday that it is likely that the Qadhafi regime will prevail in the long run? And did he err by saying that in public? And if so, is this something he needs to be taken to the woodshed for?

The President. He was making a hardheaded assessment about military capability. And I don't think anybody disputes that Qadhafi has more firepower than the opposition. He wasn't stating policy.

So let me be clear again about what our policy as determined by me, the President of the United States, is towards the situation there. I believe that Qadhafi is on the wrong side of history. I believe that the Libyan people are anxious for freedom and the removal of somebody who has suppressed them for decades now. And we are going to be in contact with the opposition, as well as in consultation with the international community, to try to achieve the goal of Mr. Qadhafi being removed from power.

Zachary Goldfarb [Washington Post].

Strategic Petroleum Reserve/Oil Supply/National Economy/Housing Market

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You talked about the option of tapping the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Can you walk through which steps or which targets have to be hit before we do that—oil price, gas price—and how much would you want to release in any particular moment? And secondly, can you talk about, in addition to energy shocks, what are the other two or three gravest threats to the economic recovery and what your administration is doing about it?

The President. The answer to your first question is, no, I will not go through the prices that would trigger the release of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. But what I can do is to give you a sense of how, historically, it's been understood.

The idea behind the Strategic Petroleum Reserve is, if there was a severe disruption in

supply—similar to what happened in the seventies, for example, when you had the OPEC making a decision not to sell for a while—how would our economy continue to function, and making sure that we've got sufficient supplies for that. Another example would be during Hurricane Katrina, when you've got a whole bunch of refineries that have been impacted and production in the Gulf has been impacted. That's another example where in a short term you can fill that hole.

Right now what we're seeing is not a shortage of supply; refineries are actually operating at fairly full capacity at the moment. The problem is, is a great deal of uncertainty in the oil markets, part of it prompted by the fact that the economy is growing faster in some places than others, but you've got China and India and Brazil and other emerging nations that are using more and more energy as their economies advance.

We already saw that trend in 2008. Because of the worldwide recession, oil prices went back down. But to some degree, a lot of what's happening in prices is as a consequence of economic growth and countries and economies starting to use more oil.

Part of it, though, is also uncertainty in terms of what's happening in the Middle East. And so one of the messages that I've—I want to send today is that we are confident about our ability to fill any potential gaps in supply. Libya, for example, does not account for a large portion of overall world production. They provide a type of oil that is highly valued, and there's a high premium on it, but basically, even if Libyan oil production was suspended for a significant period of time because of the unrest there, we'd be able to fill that gap.

So a lot of this has to do with uncertainty in the market. And part of what I want to communicate to the market is, is that we're going to do what we need to do, in consultation with both other producer nations as well as in consultation with our allies who also have reserves, to make sure that oil supplies remain stable and that economic growth is going to continue.

I do want to repeat the point that I've made, though, that, look, the American people feel this pretty acutely. Right? I mean, we can talk all we want in the abstract about world oil markets; what they're concerned about is, this is money out of my pocket. Some of the steps that we've already taken are making a difference. But obviously, if you are in a house that requires you to commute 50 miles every day to your job, you're not going to be able to sell your house immediately, particularly in this market, and move closer. You may want to buy a fuel-efficient car, but you may not be able to afford it. And so you're stuck with the old clunker that's getting 8 or 10 miles a gallon.

And so—and in fact, a lot of folks who are having the toughest time, who are either unemployed or have low-wage jobs, they're the ones that are most severely affected because they're using a higher portion of their income just to fill up the gas tank.

So we're going to try to do everything we can not only to stabilize the market; as I said, to the extent that we see any efforts to take advantage of these price spikes through price gouging, we're going to go after that. If we see significant disruptions or shifts in the market that are so disconcerting to people that we think a Strategic Petroleum Reserve release might be appropriate, then we'll take that step. And we're going to monitor very closely. And obviously, we have it teed up, so this isn't a situation where it would take a big bureaucracy and several weeks for us to implement. This is something that would take several days.

With respect to the overall economy, I think my assessment and the assessment of most economists is that, although gas prices are hurting individuals right now and obviously taking some of that tax cut that we gave them and forcing them to use it on gas as opposed to buying other items, that, in part because of the steps we took, both Democrats and Republicans, during the lame duck session, that the economic growth continues in a positive trend.

We saw that in the jobs report, which in the private sector at least, was better than expected. We've seen the unemployment rate drop a full point. And so, overall, I'm positive about the fact that we're moving slowly but surely into positive job growth over the next several months.

There are some areas we're still concerned about. Housing is one that I just mentioned. We've got a lot of folks who, because housing prices have fallen so steeply, are still hurting. Some of them are threatened with foreclosure, maybe because they lost a job. In some cases, they want to sell their house so they can move to a new job, and their house is underwater; essentially, their mortgage is higher than what the house would sell for right now.

We have a number of steps to encourage loan modifications, to encourage banks to take steps that would alleviate some of that burden and start clearing some of those homes on the market, but it's a slow process. It's a five—you're talking about $5 trillion worth of product out there. And I mentioned that I had this conversation with Warren Buffett a couple weeks ago when I was giving him the Medal of Freedom, and his point was, look, I'm bullish about this economy; when it comes to the housing market, it just takes some time to work itself out because we had such a housing bubble. We had so much construction, particularly in certain States that are harder hit than others. That was then compounded by the overall recession. And it's going to take some time for the housing market to improve. But we're continuing to take a range of steps to try to strengthen that process of recovery in the housing market.

The last point I'll make on the economy overall relates back to the budget issues that we talked about. If you looked at the last jobs report, growth in the private sector—very strong, 220,000 jobs created. Where you lost jobs was in State and local government. And that means teachers being laid off, firefighters being laid off, police officers being laid off. Now, we were able to cushion some of that over the first 2 years of this recession through the Recovery Act, and it made a huge difference all across the country. But now States are continuing to cut; local governments are continuing to cut.

I think it's very important, when we think about the budget, to understand that our long-term debt and deficits are not caused by us having Head Start teachers in the classroom. Our long-term debt and deficit are caused primarily by escalating health care costs that we see in Medicare and Medicaid that is putting huge pressure on the overall budget.

And that's why I think it's going to be important for us to have a conversation after we get the short-term budget done about how do we really tackle the problem in a comprehensive way. And that means not just going after Head Start or Corporation for Public Broadcasting; that's not where the money is. What it means is, is that we've got to make sure that we're tackling defense spending, we're tackling tax expenditures and tax loopholes, that we're tackling entitlements, and that we're thinking about how do we really get our arms around those things that are driving the debt and deficit, in a serious way and in a bipartisan way.

I'll make this the last question. Hisham Bourar [Alhurra TV].

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Thank you, Mr. President——

The President. Why don't you get a microphone so we can hear you?

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Did you have contacts with other leaders in the Middle East? And when you appraised them for reforms, are you looking at other options where other leaders in the region can be supported to stay in power in the Middle East?

The President. I'm in constant contact with leaders throughout the Middle East, and I've had a fairly consistent message to all of them: Number one, the United States believes in the right of peaceful protests and the ability of ordinary people to express their grievances to their government. And we oppose the use of violence in response to peaceful protests. So that's one clear message that we tried to send.

The second message we've try to send is that it is in the interest of the entire region to reform itself: to reform itself both politically and economically so that the incredible talents of young people throughout that region can be tapped; so that the young man, whether he is in Sanaa or he's in Tripoli or she's in Cairo or Amman, that they know that if they work hard, if they are getting an education, that they have

an opportunity to live a better life, that they can get a job that pays a good wage and supports their family, and that they can have the basic necessities of life, and that they have personal security and they have personal freedom.

Now, each country is different, and so the evolution, the process towards that vision is going to differ in each country. But my consistent message to leaders in the region is that this process of change can be a great opportunity for the Middle East, because if you can tap into the talents of those young people, then you can start seeing the kind of economic growth in that region that you've started to see in other places in the world.

And there's no reason why countries in the Middle East shouldn't have the same kind of growth rates that you're seeing in China and India. There's nothing inherent about the people in those countries that would prevent that. What's preventing it is the fact that for many decades you've seen a lack of opening up that allows you to take advantage of the global economy.

And I think that, as I said, each country is going to be different, and it's going to ultimately be up to the people in those countries to determine the best form for them to seize this opportunity, but we should be on the side of those who want to seize this opportunity.

Okay?

Q. Japanese press—Mr. President, from the Japanese media?

The President. From the Japanese media, because of—because obviously, we're concerned about what's happening in Japan.

Situation in Japan

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I'm Toshi Ogata with Asahi Shimbun, a Japanese newspaper. I have two questions on the tragedy in Japan. So you already touched on the issue in your opening statement. I'd like to ask about your personal feeling on the situation. You went to Japan last year; you went to Kamakura. Now a tsunami hit the coast of Japan, and waves washed away cars and houses, and Japanese people are devastated. I just want to ask about your personal thoughts and feelings on that.

And secondly, you also touched on the possibility of assistance from the United States to Japan. And the Japanese Government publicly said that Japan asked for help from U.S. forces in Japan. Are you waiting to provide those assistance?

The President. The answer to your second question is yes. And so I already told Prime Minister Kan that we will provide whatever assistance that they need. My understanding is that the main assistance that we're going to be able to provide them is lift capacity, the ability for us to, I think, help in the cleanup.

Obviously, when you have a tsunami like this as well as an earthquake, you have huge disruptions both in the infrastructure; you have boats and houses and cars that are washed into main thoroughfares, and that requires heavy equipment. And so any assistance that we can provide, we will be providing.

I'm heartbroken by this tragedy. I think when you see what's happening in Japan, you are reminded that for all our differences in culture or language or religion, that ultimately, humanity is one. And when we face these kinds of natural disasters, whether it's in New Zealand or Haiti or Japan, then you think about your own family, and you think how would you feel if you lost a loved one, or if your entire lifesavings were gone because of the devastation.

And the Japanese people are such close friends of ours, and I have such a close personal friendship and connection to the Japanese people—in part because I grew up in Hawaii, where I was very familiar with Japanese culture—that that just makes our concerns that much more acute.

But I am very confident, though, obviously, that the Japanese people are so resourceful, Japan is such a powerful economy and such an advanced economy technologically, that Japan will successfully rebuild. And it has experience dealing with natural disasters. It has dealt with them before and will deal with them again. And Japan, I'm sure, will come back stronger than ever, hopefully, with our help. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:33 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.; T. Boone Pickens, founder, BP Capital, L.P.; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; and Pfc. Bradley E. Manning, USA, who was accused of leaking classified documents to the WikiLeaks organization.

Remarks Honoring the 2010 Stanley Cup Champion Chicago Blackhawks
March 11, 2011

The President. Hello, hello, hello, everybody! Hello, Blackhawks fans! Now, we have hosted a lot of teams at the White House over the last 2 years, but this one is a little sweeter. It's pretty special. That's because it is the first time as President I get to say congratulations on bringing a world championship to my hometown, the city of Chicago.

I want to start by recognizing Rocky Wirtz, John McDonough, and all the folks who helped make this team what it is. Give them a big round of applause.

We're proud to have some Members of Congress here today. You guys didn't have anything to do with it—[*laughter*]—but I know you're big fans, so we want to acknowledge you.

Finally, I want to congratulate all the fans. We have a proud tradition in Chicago of believing that no matter how long it takes, how much we have to endure, it's only a matter of time before our team finally wins it all. [*Laughter*] The waiting builds character. We have a lot of character. [*Laughter*]

Now, I have to say, even by Chicago standards, 49 years, that's a pretty long time. [*Laughter*] To put that in perspective, the last time the Blackhawks won the Stanley Cup, a movie cost 69 cents. JFK had just moved into the White House. I was still in diapers. [*Laughter*] And when the legendary Glenn Hall played goalie for the Hawks, he did it with a wooden stick and no mask.

So you can understand why people were a little skeptical when, after this team's first practice last year, Patrick Kane came off the ice and said, "We want to win the Stanley Cup." We had heard that before.

But this time it was different. This was the kind of tough, talented, selfless team that Chicago had been waiting for.

It was a team built around people like Coach Q, who brought years of experience and focus to the bench. Players like 22-year-old captain Jonathan Toews, who lit up the ice on his way to being named playoff MVP. There's Patrick Kane, who scored the biggest goal in franchise history in the overtime to win the Cup. And when Duncan Keith had seven of his teeth knocked out by a puck—seven—some of you guys there, you're missing a few, he's missing seven at one time—but he bit down on some gauze, took a shot of Novocain, and headed right back out onto the ice. They did all this for their fans. And along the way, they helped Chicago become a hockey town again.

During the playoffs, even the Michael Jordan statue had a Blackhawks uniform on. [*Laughter*] After this team won the Stanley Cup, 2 million people lined Michigan Avenue to see the victory parade go by. And when the Hawks visited Wrigley Field during the Crosstown Classic, they did something even tougher than winning the Cup: They got 40,000 Sox fans and Cubs fans to stand up and cheer at the same time. [*Laughter*] Never happened before.

In the end, it was about more than just bringing home one of the biggest trophies in sports. It was about a city coming together behind one team and one goal. It was about a new generation of players and fans understanding what it feels like to be the best in the world. It was about getting the chance to share that experience with others.

And that's why, over the last year, members of this team have been taking the Cup on the road, stopping everywhere from ice rinks to

hospitals to let people have their moment with the trophy and help spread some of the joy.

Yesterday, for example, they took the Cup to visit wounded warriors at Walter Reed hospital. So they helped raise the spirits of men and women who've sacrificed so much on behalf of our country. Later today they're going to join Michelle in helping kids stay active by trying out some street hockey out on the South Lawn. So I want to thank them for everything they're doing to give back.

And finally, because it's almost playoff time again, I want to wish these guys the best of luck going into the postseason. I don't want to jinx anything, but after winning 8 of their last 10 games, I think it might be time for Patrick to start growing that playoff mullet again. [*Laughter*] I thought it was pretty sharp. Because I want to see you back here next year.

And let me, yes, just say to all the Bears fans, Bulls fans, White Sox fans, and Cubs fans—[*laughter*]—I want to see all of you sometime soon as well.

So congratulations, guys. Thank you.

What have you got for me here?

[*At this point, the President was presented with a team jersey.*]

Thank you so much. Thank you. There we go. I think we've even got some blood on here. [*Laughter*] It shows it's authentic. Fantastic.

Chicago Blackhawks President and Chief Executive Officer John F. McDonough. Do you want to put the ring on?

The President. Oh, absolutely. I've got to try the ring out and everything. That's what you call some bling, right there. [*Laughter*] All right, there you go.

Pete, you got me here?

Let's step up a little bit.

[*The President posed for a photograph with members of the Chicago Blackhawks organization.*]

Center Jonathan Toews. We got this for you too.

The President. What else do we got here? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Toews. A mini Stanley Cup, there you go.

The President. Look at this, a mini Stanley—now, can I say that when I first saw this I thought, it looks so much bigger on TV. [*Laughter*] But then it turned out it was just a replica. But what a wonderful, wonderful gift this is. Thank you so much, team. We are proud of you. Thank you. Appreciate you. Go, Blackhawks!

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to W. Rockwell Wirtz, chairman, Joel Quenneville, head coach, Patrick Kane, right wing, and Duncan Keith, defenseman, Chicago Blackhawks; Michael J. Jordan, former guard, National Basketball Association's Chicago Bulls; and Chief Official White House Photographer Peter Souza.

Statement on the Earthquake and Tsunami in Japan and the Tsunami Warning for the Pacific
March 11, 2011

Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the people of Japan, particularly those who have lost loved ones in the earthquake and tsunamis. The United States stands ready to help the Japanese people in this time of great trial. The friendship and alliance between our two nations is unshakeable and only strengthens our resolve to stand with the people of Japan as they overcome this tragedy. We will continue to closely monitor tsunamis around Japan and the Pacific going forward, and we are asking all our citizens in the affected region to listen to their State and local officials, as I have instructed FEMA to be ready to assist Hawaii and the rest of the U.S. States and Territories that could be affected.

The President's Weekly Address
March 12, 2011

March is Women's History Month, a time not only to celebrate the progress that women have made, but also the women throughout our history who have made that progress possible.

One inspiring American who comes to mind is Eleanor Roosevelt. In 1961, the former First Lady was unhappy about the lack of women in Government, so she marched up to President Kennedy and handed him a three-page list of women who were qualified for top posts in his administration. This led the President to select Mrs. Roosevelt as the head of a new commission to look at the status of women in America and the unfairness they routinely faced in their lives.

Though she passed away before the commission could finish its work, the report they released spurred action across the country. It helped galvanize a movement led by women that would help make our society a more equal place.

It's been almost 50 years since the Roosevelt commission published its findings, and there have been few similar efforts by the Government in the decades that followed. That's why last week, here at the White House, we released a new comprehensive report on the status of women in the spirit of the one that was released half a century ago.

There was a lot of positive news about the strides we've made, even in recent years. For example, women have caught up with men in seeking higher education. In fact, women today are more likely than men to attend and graduate from college.

Yet there are also reminders of how much more work remains to be done. Women are still more likely to live in poverty in this country. In education, there are areas like math and engineering where women are vastly outnumbered by their male counterparts. This is especially troubling, for we know that to compete with nations around the world, these are fields in which we need to harness the talents of all our people. That's how we'll win the future.

And today, women still earn, on average, only about 75 cents for every dollar a man earns. That's a huge discrepancy. And at a time when folks across this country are struggling to make ends meet and many families are just trying to get by on one paycheck after a job loss, it's a reminder that achieving equal pay for equal work isn't just a women's issue, it's a family issue.

In one of my first acts as President, I signed a law so that women who've been discriminated against in their salaries could have their day in court to make it right. But there are steps we should take to prevent that from happening in the first place. That's why I was so disappointed when an important bill to give women more power to stop pay disparities, the "Paycheck Fairness Act," was blocked by just two votes in the Senate. And that's why I'm going to keep up the fight to pass the reforms in that bill.

Achieving equality and opportunity for women isn't just important to me as President. It's something I care about deeply as the father of two daughters who wants to see his girls grow up in a world where there are no limits to what they can achieve.

As I've traveled across the country visiting schools and meeting young people, I've seen so many girls passionate about science and other subjects that were traditionally not open to them. We even held a science fair here at the White House, where I met a young woman named Amy Chyao. She was only 16 years old, but she was actually working on a treatment for cancer. She never thought, "Science isn't for me." She never thought, "Girls can't do that." She was just interested in solving a problem. And because someone was interested in giving her a chance, she has the potential to improve lives.

That tells me how far we've come. But it also tells me we have to work even harder to close the gaps that still exist and to uphold that simple American ideal: We are all equal and deserving of the chance to pursue our own version of happiness. That's what Eleanor Roosevelt was striving toward half a century ago. That's why this report matters today. And that's why, on behalf of all our daughters and all our sons, we've got to keep making progress in the years ahead.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:10 p.m. on March 11 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on March 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 11, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 12.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at Kenmore Middle School in Arlington, Virginia

March 14, 2011

The President. Hey! Hey, Kenmore! How are you? Good to see you guys. Hello, everybody. Hello, everybody. How are you? All right, everybody, have a seat. Everybody, have a seat.

Well, I was just wandering out and I—suddenly all of you were here. Well, it is wonderful to see you guys. First of all, I want to introduce—this is Arne Duncan, who's the Secretary of Education and a good friend of mine. Give him a big round of applause.

How's everybody doing today?

Audience members. Good!

The President. Good. Well, I wanted to come by partly because we've designated this Education Month at the White House. And what we are doing is traveling all across the country, finding schools that are doing a great job, and highlighting how we can make sure that every school is doing a great job.

So I want to congratulate your principal, I want to congratulate your teachers, and most of all, I want to congratulate the students for doing some outstanding work here at Kenmore. You guys have made us proud. When we look at the improvement that you're making, day in, day out, what that tells me is, is that you've got a lot of hard-working young people who are really focused on learning.

And there's never been a time where that's more important. Part of what I'm going to do when I speak to the other group is to explain that it used to be, if you were willing to work hard, you didn't really need an education to get a good job. You could go to a factory, and you could build things, you could make things. But you didn't necessarily have to know math. You didn't necessarily have to be able to communicate that effectively.

These days, if you want to get a good job, have a great career, the only way you're going to do it is if you have a good education. And so that starts early. It can't—you can't wait until you get to be old like me—[*laughter*]—to get an education. You got to start young. And that's what you guys are doing each and every day.

So the main message I have for you is that we're proud of you, but we need you all to buckle down and keep working hard. This is right about the age when I—what grades are you guys? Seventh, eighth?

Audience members. Eighth grade.

The President. This is eighth grade. I've got a confession to make. This is probably right around the time I was at my worst. I mean, I was getting in trouble all the time. I was in the principal's office all the time. I was—and so boys especially—[*laughter*]—this is the age where you start getting a little distracted. And so I just hope that everybody really stays focused. Yes, have fun, but listen to your teachers, listen to your parents, and make sure that you really are doing everything you can to succeed in school.

And I know that—I know you will, and as a consequence, I know that you guys are going to be able to do anything that you ever want to do, including maybe being the Secretary of Education or the President of the United States.

All right. Thank you, guys. See you later. See you. And teachers, good job! We're proud of you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:04 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to John A. Word, principal, Kenmore Middle School.

Remarks at Kenmore Middle School in Arlington
March 14, 2011

Hello, everybody! Hello! Thank you so much. Thank you. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat, everybody.

It is wonderful to be here at Kenmore. And I want to first of all thank our principal, Mr.—Dr. John Word—Doctor; Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools Patrick Murphy. I believe that the Arlington County School Board is represented here—where are they? There they are over there, all doing great work. We've got your own Congressman, Jim Moran, here in the house. And we've got somebody who I believe is going to go down as the finest Secretary of Education we've ever had, Arne Duncan.

Now, before I begin, let me just say that like all Americans, I continue to be heartbroken by the images of devastation in Japan. And I know all of you, young and old, have been watching the full magnitude of this tragedy unfold. I want to reiterate America's support for the people of Japan, who are some of our closest friends and allies. And I've said directly to the Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Minister Kan, that the United States will continue to offer any assistance we can as Japan recovers from multiple disasters and we will stand with the people of Japan in the difficult days ahead.

Now, I just had a chance to talk with some of your teachers as well as some students, who told me about your all-school project that's weaving the life and music of Duke Ellington into your classes. And by getting students engaged in learning, you're teaching the kinds of skills about how to think and how to work together that young people are going to need in college and beyond. That's what all of our schools need to be doing.

And in an economy that's more competitive and connected than ever before, a good job and a good career is going to demand a good education. Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs are going to require more than a high school diploma. So if you want a bright future, you're going to need a college degree or advanced training.

And as Arne mentioned, unfortunately, too many students aren't getting a world-class education today. As many as a quarter of American students aren't finishing high school. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations. And America has fallen to ninth in the proportion of young people with a college degree. Understand, we used to be first, and we now rank ninth. That's not acceptable.

And turning these statistics around isn't just the right thing to do for our kids, it's the right thing to do for our economy, because the best jobs program out there is a good education. The best economic policy is one that produces more college graduates. And that's why for the sake of our children and our economy and America's future, we're going to have to do a better job educating every single one of our sons and daughters, all of them.

Now, that responsibility begins not in our classrooms, but it begins in our homes. It begins with parents who are instilling in their kids not only a love of learning, but also the self-confidence and especially the self-discipline and work ethics that are at the heart of success in school and success in life. We've got to work hard. Young people, I'm talking to you. [*Laughter*] I've got a couple of them at home. And the truth is, the world's going to be more competitive, and nobody's going to just give success to you. You're going to have to earn it, and that means you've got to apply yourself.

So that you're going to learn at home, first and foremost. But that's not where the responsibility ends. All of us have a responsibility—not just as parents, but as citizens—for giving our kids the best possible education.

Now, for a long time we weren't sure about how to give our kids that kind of education. There were a lot of arguments for a lot of years. Some people thought, if you just put more money into education, that would solve the problem. And then on—the other side thought, money doesn't matter, what we need is reform. In fact, there were those who argued

that we should just dismantle the public education system altogether. Rather than working together, both sides remained locked in this stalemate year after year, decade after decade, and nothing much changed.

And then something began to happen in States and local school districts. Instead of getting caught up in these old, stale debates, people began to agreeing—to agree that, you know what, we need both more money and more reform. We need more resources for the schools, but we've got to reorganize how our schools are doing business in order to assure success for our young people. People began coming together—parents, students, teachers, administrators, reformers, local officials—and we started witnessing amazing success stories all across America.

There's a school in Denver, Bruce Randolph School, that went from being one of the worst schools in Colorado to graduating 97 percent of its seniors last May. In Cincinnati, Taft High School went from handing out only one diploma for every five students to graduating 95 percent of its seniors and preparing them for careers in technology.

So our goal as an administration, my goal as President, has been to build on these successes across America. We know what can work. And so 2 years ago, we started doing exactly that: trying to figure out how do we incentivize success by starting something—a competition called Race to the Top. So what we're doing is we're saying to States: Prove you're serious about reform, and we'll show you the money.

And because it's a competition for less than 1 percent of what our country spends on education each year, Race to the Top has led over 40 States to raise their standards for teaching, learning, and student achievement. And these standards weren't developed in Washington, but they were developed by Republican and Democratic Governors all across this country.

So we've made enormous progress. As Arne has said, this is probably the most significant education reform initiative that we've seen in a generation. But we need to make sure we're reaching every child in America, not just those in States or districts that take part in Race to the Top. And that's why not only do we need to continue this competition, we've got to open it up. We're letting local school districts apply. [*Applause*] We're going to let local school districts apply.

And that's why we need to take the same bottom-up approach when it comes to reforming America's most important education law, otherwise known as No Child Left Behind. We have to reform No Child Left Behind.

Now, over these last few weeks, during what we've called Education Month around the White House, I've been traveling across the country talking with folks about education. In fact, we've actually been doing that for the last couple of years. And what I've heard, what Arne's heard, what the rest of my team has heard loud and clear from teachers and students and parents and communities is that No Child Left Behind got some things right and got some things wrong. The goals of No Child Left Behind were the right goals: making a promise to educate every child with an excellent teacher. That's the right thing to do; that's the right goal. Higher standards are right. Accountability is right. Shining a light on the achievement gap between students of different races and backgrounds and those with and without disabilities, that's the right thing to do.

But what hasn't worked is denying teachers, schools, and States what they need to meet these goals. That's why we need to fix No Child Left Behind. We need to make sure we're graduating students who are ready for college and ready for careers. We need to put outstanding teachers in every classroom and give those teachers the pay and the support that they deserve. [*Applause*] I got some applause for that one. [*Laughter*]

We need to not only hold failing schools accountable, we need to help turn those schools around. In the 21st century, it's not enough to leave no child behind, we need to help every child get ahead. We need to get every child on a path to academic excellence.

Now, here's the good news: I am proud of the commitment by Democrats and Republicans in Congress to fix No Child Left Behind, to make this reform a reality, because they

recognize education is an area where we can't afford to drag our feet. As Arne says, our kids only get one shot at an education, and we've got to get it right. So that's why I'm calling on Congress to send me an education reform bill I can sign into law before the next school year begins—before next year's school year.

I want every child in this country to head back to school in the fall knowing that their education is America's priority. Let's seize this education moment. Let's fix No Child Left Behind.

Now, last week, we got a reminder of why it's so critical that we reform this law. According to new estimates, under the system No Child Left Behind put in place, more than 80 percent of our schools may be labeled as failing—80 percent of our schools. Four out of five schools will be labeled as failing. Now, that's an astonishing number. And our impulse is to either be outraged that the numbers are so high or skeptical that they're even true. And let's face it, skepticism is somewhat justified. We know that four out of five schools in this country aren't failing. So what we're doing to measure success and failure is out of line.

In fact, the list of supposedly failing schools is—includes schools that are making extraordinary progress, including Kenmore. So yes, we've still got more work to do here at this school to close the achievement gap. I think Dr. Word would agree with that. We've got to make sure that every student is on track. But I mean, we can see here at Kenmore what—Kenmore's thriving. You guys are doing great. You got more work to do, but you're doing fine.

So what this means, though, is, is that we need a better way of figuring out which schools are deeply in trouble, which schools aren't, and how we get not only the schools that are in really bad shape on track, how do we help provide the tools to schools that want to get even better to get better.

That way of measuring success and failure, that's the first problem with No Child Left Behind that we need to fix. Instead of labeling schools a failure one day and then throwing up our hands and walking away from them, we need to refocus on the schools that need the most help. We need to hold our schools accountable for the success of every child: Black, White, Latino, Asian, students with disabilities, English language learners.

We need to make sure some of our best teachers are teaching in some of our worst schools. We need to reward schools that are doing the difficult work of turning themselves around. We're going to have to take a series of steps across a broad range of measures to not only target our most troubled schools, but also raise expectations for all our schools.

So first, we're going to have to fix how schools are labeled and identified. But we've got to do more than that. In recent years, 15 States have actually lowered their standards to make it easier for their kids to meet the targets set by No Child Left Behind. Think about that. That was—that's a pretty perverse incentive when States say to themselves, you know what, let's lower our standards so that we have an easy time—easier time passing those standards so that we don't get punished under No Child Left Behind. That makes no sense. That's inexcusable.

So instead of measuring students based on whether they're above or below an arbitrary bar, we need to set better standards to make sure our students are meeting one clear goal: They're graduating ready for college and ready for a career. That's the goal we need to set. To know whether our kids are on track to meet that goal, we need better assessments.

Now, I want to speak to teachers in particular here. I'm not talking about more tests. I'm not talking about teaching to the test. We don't need to know whether a student can fill out a bubble. We do need to know whether they're making progress. We do need to know whether they're not only mastering reading, math, and science, but also developing the kinds of skills, like critical thinking and creativity and collaboration, that I just saw on display with the students that I met here. Those are skills they're going to need for the rest of their lives, not just to be good workers, but to be good citizens.

Now, that doesn't mean testing's going to go away; there will be testing. But the point is, is that we need to refine how we're assessing

progress so that we can have accountability without rigidity, accountability that still encourages creativity inside the classroom and empowers teachers and students and administrators.

Of course, we also know that better standards, better assessments, and better curriculum won't make a difference without outstanding teachers. Every day in this country, teachers are doing a heroic job for their kids—every day. They're taking on the problems that follow students into class, come in early to rewrite lessons, spending hours after school tutoring students. I know; my sister is a teacher. Now, in South Korea, teachers are known as nation builders, and I think it's time we treated our teachers with the same level of respect right here in the United States of America.

But if we're serious about treating teachers that way, if we're serious about educating all our kids with an excellent teacher, then we're going to have to fix No Child Left Behind.

What No Child Left Behind says is that teachers need to be certified before they step into the classroom. Now, certification can be an important measure of the quality of the teacher, and obviously, we want teachers to be well-qualified. But when the quality of a teacher can make or break a child's education, we've got to make sure our certified teachers are also outstanding teachers, teachers who can reach every last child.

And so what we need to do is a better job preparing and supporting our teachers, measuring their success in the classroom, holding them accountable. We're going to have to stop making excuses for the occasional bad teacher. We're going to have to start paying good ones like the professionals that they are. If we truly believe that teaching is one of the most valued professions in society—and I can't think of a more important profession—then we've got to start valuing our great teachers.

And there are a lot of ways of valuing teachers. I don't know any teacher who got into it for the pay. [*Laughter*] The teachers who are here, you got into it for the kids, for the satisfaction of feeling like your passing on knowledge that these young people will use and carry on for the rest of their lives.

So we need to reward you by letting you make more of a difference for your kids. We need to build on what's being done here at Kenmore: give our best teachers more time to learn from each other, more time to mentor each other, more responsibilities in their schools. And to replace the baby boomers who are retiring in the coming years, we're going to have to recruit a whole new generation of teachers, including a hundred thousand new math and science teachers over the next decade.

So these are the steps we're going to have to take to fix No Child Left Behind. And together with what we're already doing to make college more affordable for millions more students, I'm confident these reforms will help us meet the goal that I set when I took office, which is, by the end of the decade, we will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. We'll be number one again. That's my priority.

So these steps will require reforms. They'll require a change in rules and standards and even attitudes. But let me just point out, there's no avoiding the fact they'll also cost some money. Fixing our failing schools costs money. It requires reform, but it costs some money. Recruiting and rewarding the best teachers will cost money. Making it possible for families to send their kids to college costs money.

Now, after a decade of deficits, there isn't a lot of money to go around. I understand that. And for too long, Government's been spending more than it's been taking in, and we can't keep that up. We're going to have to cut whatever spending we can afford to do without.

So I've called on a 5-year freeze on annual domestic spending. That will cut the deficit by more than $400 billion over the next decade, making that kind of spending a much smaller share of the economy, smaller than it's been in 50 years. Right now we're sitting down with Republicans and Democrats to find other ways to get our deficits under control.

But even as we do, we can't be reckless and we can't be irresponsible about how we cut.

Let me make it plain: We cannot cut education. We can't cut the things that will make America more competitive.

I mean, think about what happens in your own family when somebody loses a job or has an illness and you need to cut back. What do you do? You start by skipping that vacation you'd been planning, or you see what's on TV instead of going to the movies. Maybe you start packing your own lunch. There are a whole bunch of things that you might do. The last thing you're going to do is to dip into your child's college savings. That's too important. You're not going to give that up.

Well, what's true for your family is true for the American family. It's the same principle. A budget that sacrifices our commitment to education would be a budget that's sacrificing our country's future. That would be a budget that sacrifices our children's future, and I will not let it happen.

So yes, I'm determined to cut our deficits. But I refuse to do it by telling students here, who are so full of promise, that we're not willing to invest in your future. I'm not willing to tell these young people right here that their education isn't a priority.

I'm talking about students like Katherine Diaz, who says, "I think I should have the opportunity to be who I want to be." And it turns out that Katherine wants to either be a professional violinist or the first woman President of the United States. [*Laughter*] So she's still—Katherine's still—she's not sure yet. [*Laughter*] She might do both. You could do it one at a time: professional violinist, President. [*Laughter*]

Or I'm talking about Roberto Claure. Where's Roberto? There's Roberto, right here. He says, "With good schools and good teachers, we can grow up to be anything we want." So—[*applause*]. It turns out Roberto wants to be the first Hispanic President of the United States. [*Laughter*] So you guys will have to work out, sort of, the sequence. [*Laughter*]

Roberto, Katherine, the millions of students like them across the country, they need us to offer them the best education possible, not only because that's how they'll succeed, not only because that's how we'll outcompete countries around the world, but because that's what we do. That's who we are. That's what America's about.

We are a place that believes every child, no matter where they come from, can grow up to be anything they want, where Katherine or Roberto or a skinny kid with a funny name named Barack Obama—[*laughter*]—can grow up to be President of the United States. That's who we are. That's the commitment we make to the next generation.

And I'm confident that if we fix No Child Left Behind, if we continue to reform American education, continue to invest in our children's future, that's the America we'll always be.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:24 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen of Denmark
March 14, 2011

President Obama. Well, thank you very much, everybody. Michelle and I both have very fond memories of the extraordinary hospitality that was shown to us when we traveled to Denmark in the first 2 years of my Presidency.

It is wonderful to be able to return the favor to my good friend Prime Minister Rasmussen. There are many Rasmussens in Denmark, but Lars Lokke and I have had a chance to work in international forums together on a wide range of issues, and I've got extraordinary respect for his leadership.

We discussed a wide range of issues here today. Of special importance has been our appreciation of the sacrifices that have been made by Danish troops in Afghanistan and the

extraordinary leadership that Denmark has shown as part of ISAF.

Denmark is not a large country, but proportional to its population, it's made as significant an effort and made as many sacrifices as anybody in helping to stabilize Afghanistan and now help to effectuate a transition to Afghan leadership. And Danish soldiers are fighting in some of the toughest areas, without caveat. We have discussed how 2011 is going to be a year of transition, and under Prime Minister Rasmussen's leadership, he has been able to build a consensus within Denmark about how that transition would proceed that I think is a model for all our allies and participants in Afghanistan.

So we are very grateful for the excellent work that he has done personally, and obviously, most grateful for the sacrifices of Danish troops in helping to underwrite the security of all of us.

We also discussed the situation in the Middle East. And Prime Minister Rasmussen has been a leader in Europe in making sure that we applied tough sanctions against the Qadhafi regime in Libya. We both share the view that Mr. Qadhafi has lost legitimacy and he needs to leave and that we, as an international community, have to speak firmly against any violence that's directed at civilians; that we have to make sure to provide humanitarian assistance, both inside of Libya as well as along the border regions, where so many people have left; and that it's going to be very important for us to look at a wide range of options that continue to tighten the noose around Mr. Qadhafi and apply additional pressure. And so we will be continuing to coordinate closely, both through NATO as well as the United Nations and other international fora, to look at every single option that's available to us in bringing about a better outcome for the Libyan people.

We discussed our close cooperation in counterterrorism efforts, and I appreciate the leadership that Prime Minister Rasmussen has shown on that front. We have worked effectively together on a wide range of issues, and Denmark, again, despite being a small country, is one that obviously has been concerned about terrorist activity within its borders. And so we will continue to strengthen our counterterrorism efforts there.

And we also had a wide-ranging discussion about energy. Denmark is a leader on clean energy and alternative energy. Prime Minister Rasmussen has just put forward a very ambitious and impressive program for complete reliance on clean and alternative energies by 2050, in part, as he points out, because even if you don't believe in climate change—and we both do—it's still the right thing to do for energy independence and it's still the right thing in terms of producing new jobs and new technologies for the future.

Finally, we discussed the situation in Japan. And obviously, I want to reiterate how heartbroken we are by the images of the devastation there. I know Prime Minister Rasmussen agrees that this is an international tragedy. And although Japan is a highly advanced economy and technologically equipped to rebuild at this moment of crisis, it's important that all of us join together in providing any help and assistance that we can in the days and months to come.

And so I'm in close contact with Prime Minister Kan, and our teams are in close cooperation, as is our military in the region. And we expect to continue that cooperation until we have some stabilization of the situation there.

But, Prime Minister Rasmussen, once again, thank you for all the help that you've provided to the United States, all the leadership that you've provided internationally. Denmark is a country that, in American terms, punches above its weight and does an outstanding job on a wide range of issues. We're so glad of our strong relationship and friendship between our two countries, and we're very appreciative that you took the time to visit us.

Prime Minister Rasmussen. Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you for your warm welcome, your great hospitality.

As you just said, and I truly believe it's the truth, Denmark and the U.S. are close friends, long-term allies. We share values, we share interests, and the bonds are not only strong between our two governments, but between our two peoples.

Afghanistan is the key priority, and I was pleased to inform the President about the recent decision taken in Denmark, which proves that we are in this with a long-term perspective. We want the mission done. Two thousand eleven is an important year, where we have to start transition. I just informed the President that I paid a visit to our troops in Afghanistan just 2 weeks ago. I talked to Governor Mangal in Helmand Province, and he emphasized that we have to do more in order to get rid of the negative impact from narcotic in terms of lack of development, lack of governance, lack of security.

I have decided to increase our assistance to alternative crops in Afghanistan, and we're working closely together in that regard in Afghanistan.

We condemn the violent repression to the Libyan people. European leaders gathered last Friday, sent a very strong signal to Qadhafi. He should be history. He has lost his legitimacy, as you just mentioned. And I think it's important that the international society examine all options to protect the Libyan people.

Fortunately, change is going on in other countries in Middle East and North Africa as well, and we had an opportunity to discuss especially the very positive transition in Egypt and Tunisia.

We agreed that one field for close cooperation should be job creation. What is important now is that the young generation of those countries have always given a hope for a brighter future. And I think there is a huge potential for close cooperation in that field; for instance, in the area of IT, where I think we should establish a close cooperation.

And as you mentioned, we discussed a full range of other issues as well. As I said, we share values. We are working together in counterterrorism, piracy, where we had to increase our cooperation. So I think our meeting here today reflects the fact that we have a common desire for taking our responsibility in order to create a future with peace and prosperity. So thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Obama. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:34 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser
March 16, 2011

The President. Thank you. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat. You're making me blush. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back!

Boy, it is nice to see so many friends in a room. [*Laughter*] I live in Washington, so that doesn't always happen. [*Laughter*] But when you gather up so many folks who helped get me where I am today—I am reminded of that story of Abraham Lincoln when he was President. Back then anybody could have—he had office hours. And he'd let people come in and meet with him. And somebody insisted on coming to see him, barged through the door, said to his personal assistant, "I need to see the President. I'm the one who got him elected." And none of you have done that, of course. [*Laughter*]

So the assistant goes in, mentions this to Lincoln. Lincoln looks at his watch. He's got a little bit of time. He says, "Oh, bring the guy in." He says, "Sir, I understand you're the person responsible for getting me elected." He says, "That's right." He says, "Well, I forgive you." [*Laughter*] So I forgive all of you. [*Laughter*]

I want to acknowledge obviously somebody who has done extraordinary work. This is the person who not only has fought for the things we care about—first as a mayor, then as a Governor, most recently as DNC chair—he's also somebody who was the first elected official to endorse me outside of Illinois when I announced for President of the United States. And he did so in the capital of the old Confederacy, at a time when very few people thought I was going to win. So, clearly, he was term

limited. [*Laughter*] But nevertheless, it took a lot of courage. [*Laughter*] And so I just want to say how much I appreciate my dear, dear friend Tim Kaine.

I also just want to say a few things about David Plouffe. Somehow, he figured out how to get a 2-year sabbatical after the election, and as a consequence, has earned the enmity of all the rest of my staff, because he's now strolled in all fresh and perky. [*Laughter*] And he's got a smile on his face every day. The rest of us are—got those bags under our eyes. And he's like, "Boy, this is fun!" [*Laughter*]

But not only did he engineer what may have been one of the finest Presidential campaigns in American history, but even in the few months that he has now been in the White House, we've already seen just the enormous focus and energy and wisdom that he brings to the task of trying to make America adapt to the 21st century and be successful for generations to come. And so I'm just so proud to have David Plouffe here, and I want everybody to give him a big round of applause.

Now, as David mentioned, obviously the last 2 years have been extraordinary and historic. And the American people have gone through as tough a time as they have certainly in my lifetime and in the lifetime of most of us here. When we put together the campaign in 2008, we all understood that America was at a turning point. We understood that the wheels of history were turning more and more rapidly and that the old ways of doing business weren't going to be sufficient to make us competitive, to make sure that the American Dream lived for the next generation.

And so our campaign was geared towards the notion that there are time-tested values that bind us together as Americans—a belief in hard work and individual initiative and the free market, but also community, looking out for one another, embracing diversity—and that our task was to make sure that we worked hard to seize this moment and make sure that our institutions, our politics, our Government were all working to ensure that these values that date back to our founding would be renewed and live for this generation and the next.

And that meant that we had to make sure that our schools were educating our kids, not only to be outstanding workers and entrepreneurs, but also outstanding citizens. We had to make sure that we rebuilt America so that we could compete in this new century. We had to make sure that we had an energy policy that would not only protect the planet, but also free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil.

We had to make sure that in a nation as wealthy as ours, we were able to deliver a health care program that made sure nobody went bankrupt just because they went sick. We had to make sure that the ideals of equality and justice for all people—regardless of race and religion and sexual orientation—that those were lived out each and every day.

And we haven't finished that task, but we have made extraordinary progress over these last 2 years. It's been tough. There have been times where we had to make some very difficult decisions. And obviously, what we didn't anticipate was the depth of the recession in which we would try to—we would have to try to make some of these changes. But when you look back at the track record of work that we've done over the last 2 years, I think that it's fair to say the promise that we made to the American people has been kept, that we have delivered on change that we can believe in.

But we aren't finished. We've got more work to do. Now obviously, 2012 is coming up, and everybody here is interested in politics and electoral votes and strategy, and I'm sure each one of you have a campaign plan—[*laughter*]—that you'll be handing off to Messina and Patrick Gaspard before you leave here tonight. And there will be time for campaigning and there will be time for politics. But I guess what I want to really emphasize to all of you today is that I've always been a firm believer that good policy was good politics. And I've always been a good—I've always been a believer that what made 2008 special was we didn't tack to the varying political winds; we didn't make decisions about where we stood on issues simply based on political expediency. Our goal was to make progress for the country.

And I think that the American people sensed that. Even when they disagreed with us, I think they sensed that our real objective here was to make sure that we had a government that was worthy of the decency and goodness of the American people.

And I don't want us ever to lose that spirit. I don't want us ever to look back and say, you know what, we said things that we didn't believe in, or we pursued policies that weren't the best possible policies for the country, just because it made for smart and convenient politics.

Because ultimately, the one thing about being in this job, in addition to getting a lot of gray hair—[*laughter*]—in addition to consistently being so proud of all the hard work of people in the White House who make huge sacrifices for their families—or make huge sacrifices to be with their families, because it's such a challenging job, whether they're in the National Security Council or on our economic team, in addition to revering even more the role of our military and keeping America secure, because as Commander in Chief, I have the opportunity to deal with everybody from the newest private to the highest general, and you constantly are amazed by the sacrifices and extraordinary devotion that our military shows each and every day; the one thing that has consistently been reinforced for me as President of the United States is the basic goodness of the American people.

They're distracted sometimes. They're busy. They're worrying about making sure their kids get to school on time and making sure that their businesses stay open and trying to figure out how to pay the mortgage and worried about high gas prices, and so they're not following every in and out of the debates in Washington. But deep down there is a set of core values and core principles that are good and are right. And when we tap into that, there's nothing that can stop America. When we tap into that, only good things can happen.

And so my job as President, the job of my administration, and your job as my closest supporters, is to constantly find ways that we can tap into that goodness, and constantly find ways that, through our policies and through our—the issues that we promote, that we're bringing people together to solve problems.

Now, David mentioned on health care, that means that over the next couple of years we're going to have to make sure that we implement health care in a way that makes us proud and shows the American people that it's delivering for them and it's providing them relief from the incredible costs of health care.

It means that on energy, despite the progress that we've made, for example, increasing fuel efficiency standards and making sure that we're promoting green energy like never before, that we keep pushing to find ways to free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil and make sure that America is the capital of clean energy for decades to come.

It means that on education, we can't just stop with the incredible work that Arne Duncan's done with Race to the Top; we've got to reform No Child Left Behind to make sure that not only is no child left behind, but every child gets ahead. And that means that we're going to have to—[*applause*]—that means we're going to have to work hard this year and the next to try to forge a bipartisan consensus on how we recruit incredible new teachers and get them in the classroom and reinvigorate our schools across the country and make sure that higher education continues to be affordable.

It means on infrastructure we've got a lot of work to do. We've got a lot of crumbling roads and bridges and high-speed rail to build, and broadband lines to lay, that can put hundreds of thousands of people all across America to work and make sure that we're laying the foundation for long-term economic growth.

It means that we're going to have to work on the deficit in a serious way, not to score political points, not trying to take an expedient way out of what are going to be some very tough decisions, but rather, embracing those tough decisions and saying there's a way that our Government can live within its means, even as we're investing in those things that we need to win the future.

We've made incredible progress when it comes to issues like "don't ask, don't tell," but we're still going to have work to do to make

sure that this is a more equal and more just society. We've still got work to do on immigration reform. We've got a system that is broken right now, and as tough as that issue is, I am confident that we can be a nation of law and a nation of immigrants.

And then we've got foreign policy. We're at a moment in time where obviously all of us are heartbroken by the images of what's happening in Japan, and we're reminded of how American leadership is critical to our closest allies. Even if those allies are themselves economically advanced and powerful, there are moments where they need our help, and we're bound together by a common humanity.

But we also have the convulsions in the Middle East that offer the prospect of incredible change and offer enormous opportunities so that our children could live in a more peaceful world. But we're going to have to take advantage of them. We've ended combat operations in Iraq, but we've still got a lot of work to do to bring the Afghan war to an honorable end in a way that is safe and secure. And we're going to have to continue to be vigilant on dealing with terrorism even as we are protective of our civil liberties.

So we've got enormous challenges ahead. And the one thing I guess I want to say to all of you is that as tough as these times have been, what's amazing is the resilience that the American people have shown through as tumultuous a time as I remember in my lifetime. That's part of America as well, not only their goodness, but also their strength and their resilience.

And that's what we want to represent when we're out there talking to our friends and neighbors and our coworkers. As 2012 unfolds, I expect that we're going to have a lot of questions and there are going to be vigorous debates, but I don't want us to lose sight of the huge opportunities we have to seize the moment and make sure that America is not just changed, but is changed for the better.

There are times where Michelle reminds me that I volunteered for this job—[*laughter*]—because she looks at me and I looked tired. But I'm telling you, I am having an extraordinary time, because there aren't many moments in our lives where we know that we're making a difference. And this is one of those moments.

Everybody here is incredibly accomplished. Everybody here has achieved in their respective fields extraordinary things. I know many of your families, and you've got beautiful kids that you couldn't be prouder of. So all of us have things that we're proud of. But I tell you what, this is something that is a truly worthy endeavor, trying to make this country as good as it can be.

And so the main message I have for all of you is thank you. I appreciate all the hard work that you put in to help me become President. I appreciate your counsel. I appreciate your advice. I appreciate the fact that you're rooting for me and some of you are praying for me and some of you make me laugh when I see you and give me encouragement. And yes, I appreciate all the excellent policy advice that you give me as well. [*Laughter*]

And my hope is that the same spirit that helped change this country in 2008, that that spirit is still in each and every one of you. Obviously, the first time around it's like lightning in a bottle. There's something special about it, because you're defying the odds. And as time passes, you start taking it for granted that a guy named Barack Hussein Obama is President of the United States. [*Laughter*] It's not—[*applause*]—but we should never take it for granted. And I hope that over the next couple of years, as we're seeing a lot of you as I travel around the country, I hope that all of you still feel that sense of excitement and that sense of possibility, because we still have so much more to do.

Last point I'm actually going to make is, I hope that as we go forward, even though the politics in this country can be tough—and I'm sure that some of you are like Michelle and at some point had to just stop watching cable TV because it was getting too frustrating—I also want you to remember that as important as our political labels are, Democrat and Republican, as many tough fights as we're going to have, part of what made 2008 special is we brought the country together, reminding everybody that there's a lot more that we have in common

than separates us, and that the contest between Democrats and Republicans is much less important than the contest to make America what it can be.

I know that sometimes people may get frustrated and think, "You know what, Obama is being too nice and we need to get in there and take it to them." [*Laughter*] And there will be times where that's important. But I also think it's important for us not to lose that spirit that animated us early on, which was to say that we don't want to just fight the same old battles over and over again. It's important for us to make sure that we are actually doing the work of changing our politics even as we are changing our policies.

And that's tough. It makes our job a little bit harder sometimes. But I think it's absolutely important if we're going to achieve our goals.

So thank you, everybody. God bless you. I'm proud of you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park hotel. In his remarks, he referred to White House Senior Adviser David A. Plouffe, who introduced the President; and White House Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations James A. Messina.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Enda Kenny of Ireland
March 17, 2011

President Obama. Hello, everybody. It is my great pleasure on St. Patrick's Day to welcome the new Taoiseach, Prime Minister Kenny. We are thrilled to have him here. And we want to congratulate him on his historic victory.

We obviously have the strongest possible relationship with Ireland. The warmth, the affection, the familial and person-to-person contacts between our two countries extend far beyond any dry policy issues. There is just an incredible bond between our two countries. And that's one that we want to reaffirm here today.

We have had an excellent conversation about how Ireland is going to be bouncing back from the severe economic challenges that it's experienced over the last several years. The Taoiseach shared with me his plans and his efforts to make sure that people are put back to work in Ireland, that the financial system is stabilized. And he exudes great confidence, and I'm sure that we will be cooperating very closely with him and providing any assistance that we can on the economic front.

In addition, Ireland obviously plays an important role in the world. We want to thank him for the operations at Shannon that are so vital for us moving our troops into Afghanistan. It is a testimony to Ireland's friendship to us. In addition, Ireland actually has trainers in Afghanistan that have provided us great assistance. And I expressed my appreciation for those sacrifices. We've worked together on issues like international food security, and we will continue to work on those issues as well.

We remarked on the fact that the situation in Northern Ireland has proven to be stable, and we are going to continue to pursue all the progress that's been made there.

So overall, the state of the relationship between our two countries is extraordinarily strong. This is a wonderful tradition, each St. Patrick's Day, for me to be able to once again reaffirm the great warmth and affection that we have towards the people of Ireland.

And finally, I wanted to say today that I intend to come to Ireland in May, and I'm expecting to go not only to all the famous sites, but also to go to Moneygall, where my great-great-great-great-great-grandfather hails from. Joe Biden is envious because he wants to go first—[*laughter*]—but my expectation is, is that I'll just be laying the groundwork for what I'm sure will be an even more wonderful trip by him.

But I'm very much looking forward to that. And thank you so much for being here today. Thank you.

Prime Minister Kenny. Well, could I just say that it's an honor and a privilege for me to be here as the Taoiseach of Ireland, together with my wife Fionnuala, representing the Irish peo-

ple in the White House, and to meet President Obama and later his wife Michelle as well.

My message to the American people is that the new Government, which I lead, which has the strongest mandate in the history of the state, will continue to build on the very strong traditional links that we've had with the United States, in business and in politics and in culture and the arts and so on.

And Ireland is open for business and we continue to be open for business to the United States. We appreciate the investment of so much foreign direct investment from the U.S. to our country. But unlike previous centuries, we come bearing gifts as well. There are many Irish companies now operating in the U.S., with at least 80,000 American jobs created out of Irish firms here.

So from that point of view, Ireland will continue to be a very strong and loyal friend of the United States, and we will work with the authorities and the political process to the benefit of both countries.

I've explained to the President what our program is for our new government, how that's been accepted in terms of its fiscal element by the IMF, who have been in Dublin recently. We also reiterated that I will work with our European colleagues for the benefit of the European Union, a union of 500 million people, which is so important in the interests of this connection with the United States and the bigger world outside.

I'm absolutely thrilled, I have to say, that President Obama has confirmed that he is to come to Ireland. He follows a long line of Presidents of the United States who visited Ireland. And I can assure you, Mr. President, that his visit will be rapturously received by the people of Ireland.

And from that perspective, I thank you and hope that you will enjoy the fulfilling experience during your visit of visiting Moneygall, where some of your ancestors contributed to the welfare and the well-being of that little village right in the center of Ireland. You will be made very welcome, President, and we appreciate for a person with so many difficulties on his plate as you have, in the global sense, that you'd take time to visit Ireland.

So from that point of view, I can testify as the Irish Taoiseach, this is another great day in our country's journey, and it's a very significant statement of confidence by the most powerful political office in the world that the President of the United States decides to come to Ireland in May. We appreciate that very much, indeed, Mr. President. And we'll make sure that your visit is warmly received and generously treated. And if you want the odd round of golf, I'll be very happy to participate with you.

President Obama. I hear Taoiseach is pretty good, so I've got to be careful. I may have to practice before I play with him.

So thank you so much.

Prime Minister Kenny. Thank you very much, indeed, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Luncheon
March 17, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Thank you so much. Everyone, please have a seat.

To Taoiseach Kenny; to his lovely wife, who has made a wonderful luncheon companion; to the Vice President, who is here; to our host, Speaker Boehner, for gathering us together; Ambassador Collins and Mrs. Collins; distinguished Members of the House and Senate; distinguished guests from Irish, Northern Irish, and British governments: It is wonderful to be here and a great privilege. It's my privilege to join all of you today for this wonderful St. Patrick's Day celebration, a day when red, white, and blue has a strong hint of green.

Taoiseach Kenny, welcome. We thank you for joining us. Your presence at this lunch virtually guarantees that any partisan clashes will be limited to who is more Irish than whom. [*Laughter*]

Now, speaking of ancestry, there has been some controversy about my own background. [*Laughter*] Two years into my Presidency, some are still bent on peddling rumors about my origins. So today I want to put all those rumors to rest. It is true, my great-great-great-grandfather really was from Ireland. It's true—Moneygall, to be precise. I can't believe I have to keep pointing this out. [*Laughter*]

As John mentioned, this tradition began with Tip O'Neill and President Reagan, two men of Irish stock, quick wit, and no small amount of fighting spirit. Tip's and Gip's differences were real; their beliefs and their battles were sincere. But so too were the bonds of affection and respect for one another. In fact, on the Speaker's 70th birthday, President Reagan threw him a small party at the White House, where he offered up a toast. "Tip," he said, "if I had a ticket to heaven and you didn't have one, I would give mine away and go to hell with you." [*Laughter*] The two later left the room arm in arm.

Before 6 o'clock, it was politics; after 6 o'clock, they could be friends. They extended that safe zone to St. Patrick's Day, setting aside this lunch each year so that folks in both parties could enjoy the good cheer and the good company. Our dear friend Ted Kennedy and others persuaded Taoiseach to join them. And the only hint of fighting in the air was the contest to outdo one another's stories.

President Reagan insisted that this lunch not be a place for policy battles, but rather for good cheer and fellowship that so often is missing in Washington. "Our friendship," President Reagan said of Tip O'Neill, "is testimony to the political system that we're part of and the country that we live in, a country which permits two not so shy and not so retiring Irishmen to have it out on the issues, rather than on each other or their countrymen." I think that's a sentiment that we should all strive to keep in mind, whether Irish or not.

Over the past week, we've witnessed one of our finest allies, Japan, endure a terrible tragedy. As Americans, our first instinct naturally has been to help in any way that we can, and we will help the Japanese people as they recover and rebuild. But what these events should also remind us is that, in the scheme of things, our differences are small. In the face of all that we have in common, our differences are insignificant. None of us are alone in this world. We need one another, especially in times of turmoil and trial.

And as servants of the people who sent us here, we can all do better to live up to the example that Tip O'Neill and Ronald Reagan and others often set: to put the differences of the day aside, to seek common ground, to forge progress for the sake of this country that we love—even before 6 o'clock.

So in the months and years ahead, I hope we can summon some of the spirit of this day and work together with renewed commitment to bring about better days for all of our people. But today is a day for tens of millions of Americans of Irish descent to celebrate the tremendous influence that one small island with a big-hearted people has had on our country.

Prime Minister Kenny, I thank you and your lovely wife for coming today. We are proud to call Ireland a friend on this St. Patrick's Day and on all the days of the calendar, and we thank the Irish people for all that they've done to enrich the United States of America.

So let me grab a glass. To our guest, the Taoiseach of Ireland: Happy St. Patrick's Day to all of you, and may the friendship between our two countries grow ever greener. Cheers.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:04 p.m. at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Enda Kenny of Ireland and his wife Fionnuala; and Ireland's Ambassador to the U.S. Michael Collins and his wife Marie. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Situation in Japan
March 17, 2011

Good afternoon, everyone. Over the last several days, the American people have been both heartbroken and deeply concerned about the developments in Japan.

We've seen an earthquake and tsunami render unimaginable—an unimaginable toll of death and destruction on one of our closest friends and allies in the world. And we've seen this powerful natural disaster cause even more catastrophe through its impact on nuclear reactors that bring peaceful energy to the people of Japan.

Today I wanted to update the American people on what we know about the situation in Japan, what we're doing to support American citizens and the safety of our own nuclear energy, and how we are helping the Japanese people contain the damage, recover, and rebuild.

First, we are bringing all available resources to bear to closely monitor the situation and to protect American citizens who may be in harm's way. Even as Japanese responders continue to do heroic work, we know that the damage to the nuclear reactors in Fukushima Daiichi plant poses a substantial risk to people who are nearby. That is why yesterday, we called for an evacuation of American citizens who are within 50 miles of the plant. This decision was based upon a careful scientific evaluation and the guidelines that we would use to keep our citizens safe here in the United States or anywhere in the world.

Beyond this 50-mile radius, the risks do not currently call for an evacuation. But we do have a responsibility to take prudent and precautionary measures to educate those Americans who may be endangered by exposure to radiation if the situation deteriorates. That's why last night, I authorized the voluntary departures of family members and dependents of U.S. officials working in northeastern Japan.

All U.S. citizens in Japan should continue to carefully monitor the situation and follow the guidance of the U.S. and Japanese governments. And those who are seeking assistance should contact our Embassy and consulates, which continue to be open and operational.

Second, I know that many Americans are also worried about the potential risks to the United States. So I want to be very clear: We do not expect harmful levels of radiation to reach the United States, whether it's the West Coast, Hawaii, Alaska, or U.S. Territories in the Pacific. Let me repeat that: We do not expect harmful levels of radiation to reach the West Coast, Hawaii, Alaska, or U.S. Territories in the Pacific. That is the judgment of our Nuclear Regulatory Commission and many other experts.

Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and public health experts do not recommend that people in the United States take precautionary measures beyond staying informed. And going forward, we will continue to keep the American people fully updated, because I believe that you must know what I know as President.

Here at home, nuclear power is also an important part of our own energy future, along with renewable sources like wind, solar, natural gas, and clean coal. Our nuclear power plants have undergone exhaustive study and have been declared safe for any number of extreme contingencies. But when we see a crisis like the one in Japan, we have a responsibility to learn from this event and to draw from those lessons to ensure the safety and security of our people. That's why I've asked the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to do a comprehensive review of the safety of our domestic nuclear plants in light of the natural disaster that unfolded in Japan.

Finally, we are working aggressively to support our Japanese ally at this time of extraordinary challenge. Search and rescue teams are on the ground in Japan to help the recovery effort. A disaster assistance and response team is working to confront the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami. The U.S. military, which has helped to ensure the security of Japan for decades, is working around the clock.

To date, we've flown hundreds of missions to support the recovery efforts and distributed thousands of pounds of food and water to the Japanese people. We've also deployed some of our leading experts to help contain the damage at Japan's nuclear reactors. We're sharing with them expertise, equipment, and technology so that the courageous responders on the scene have the benefit of American teamwork and support.

And the American people have also opened up their hearts. Many have given generously to support the ongoing relief efforts. The Red Cross is providing assistance to help meet the immediate needs of those who've been displaced. And I would encourage anybody who wants to lend a hand to go to usaid.gov to learn more—that's usaid.gov—to find out how you can be helpful.

As I told Prime Minister Kan last night and reaffirmed at the Japanese Embassy here in Washington today, the Japanese people are not alone in this time of great trial and sorrow. Across the Pacific, they will find a hand of support extended from the United States as they get back on their feet. After all, we have an alliance that was forged more than a half century ago and strengthened by shared interests and democratic values. Our people share ties of family, ties of culture, and ties of commerce. Our troops have served to protect Japan's shores, and our citizens have found opportunity and friendship in Japan's cities and towns.

Above all, I am confident that Japan will recover and rebuild because of the strength and spirit of the Japanese people. Over the last few days, they've opened up their homes to one another. They've shared scarce resources of food and water. They've organized shelters, provided free medical care, and looked out for their most vulnerable citizens. One man put it simply: "It's a Japanese thing. When hard times hit, we have to help each other."

In these hard times, there remains, nevertheless, hope for the future. In one small town that had been flattened by the tsunami, emergency workers rescued a 4-month-old baby who had been swept out of her parents' arms and stranded for days among the debris. No one can say for certain just how she survived the water and the wreckage around her. There is a mystery in the course of human events.

But in the midst of economic recovery and global upheaval, disasters like this remind us of the common humanity that we share. We see it in the responders who are risking their lives at Fukushima. We show it through the help that has poured into Japan from 70 countries. And we hear it in the cries of a child, miraculously pulled from the rubble.

In the coming days, we will continue to do everything we can to ensure the safety of American citizens and the security of our sources of energy. And we will stand with the people of Japan as they contain this crisis, recover from this hardship, and rebuild their great nation.

Thanks very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:35 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on the Death of James C. Tyree
March 17, 2011

Michelle and I were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Jim Tyree. Jim was a quintessential Chicagoan, a South Side kid from humble roots who worked his way to the top but never left the city behind. He was beloved for what he gave back to the city that gave him so much, from his work with nonprofit organizations to his service on the board of the University of Chicago Medical Center to his role in giving the Sun-Times a new lease on life. He will be sorely missed, but never forgotten.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Eve and their three children in these most difficult of times.

NOTE: The statement referred to Jessica, Matthew, and Joseph Tyree, children of Mr. Tyree.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Reception
March 17, 2011

Good evening, everybody. Welcome to the White House on this beautiful St. Patrick's Day. It was remarked upon that the fountain is the appropriate green this year. Last year, Michelle asked the White House team to make the fountain green, and it was a little tepid. [*Laughter*] So people just thought there was algae in the fountain. [*Laughter*] This year they made sure that there was no confusion, so we're very happy about that.

I am not going to stand up here very long because, as the old Irish saying goes, everyone is wise until he speaks. [*Laughter*] And I know we've got some entertainment to get to. But the Irish also tells us that what fills the eye fills the heart. And tonight, in this room filled with so many friends both old and new, I can't imagine a better place to be than right here with the sons and daughters of Ireland—and those who wish they were. [*Laughter*]

I want to start by welcoming Taoiseach Kenny and his lovely wife Fionnuala. Please give them a big round of applause. Now, poor Taoiseach, he's only been in office for a little over a week. [*Laughter*] He's already jetlagged. [*Laughter*] But I'm honored that he agreed to leave the unpacking for another day and fly across the ocean to be with us here tonight.

We also have more than a few Irish and Irish American friends in the house tonight. I want to thank our very talented performers as well as the members of my administration and the Members of Congress who are here. We are joined by three very Irish Governors: Martin O'Malley, Dan Malloy, and Pat Quinn. Thank you for coming.

Every year at this time, we're reminded of just how many strands of green are woven into our American story. And even though St. Patrick's Day has perhaps been better known for revelry than reflection—[*laughter*]—it's also a chance for us to remember how the journey to America began for so many of our ancestors—including, as I discovered as I was running for office, one of mine—how millions of Irish boarded dank and crowded ships with a promise to send for their families later, often with no friends, no money, and nothing but hope waiting for them on the other side.

Like so many immigrants who came to call this country home, these men and women were guided by a deep faith and an unwavering belief that here in America, a better life is available for anybody who's willing to try. And even though they weren't always welcomed in their new land, they persevered. They built and led and defended our country while still holding fast to their heritage. And in many ways, what it means to be Irish helped define what it means to be American.

That's why today, when we think about a Tip O'Neill—whose daughter, by the way, is here tonight, and his granddaughter; it was wonderful to meet them—or a Ronald Reagan, we see an example of how it's possible to argue over policy without sacrificing friendship, how it's easy to disagree without being disagreeable if you make the effort.

When we think about a Henry Ford or a Cyrus McCormick, we see the ingenuity that has driven generations of Americans to build the businesses and create the inventions that have helped make a nation an engine of prosperity.

When we think about an Audie Murphy or a John King, two of the hundreds of Irish Americans who've won the Medal of Honor, we see the heroism and bravery that comes with risking your own life for your country.

When we think about a family like the Kennedys, we see a steadfast belief in the importance of service and the duty each of us has to stand up for those who can't stand up for themselves.

In so many ways, the Irish and their descendants have set an example for us as a people. But they've also set an example for us as a nation struggling to be more just and more free. In 1845, Frederick Douglass, the great fighter for freedom here in this country, had just published his "Narrative of a Life of an American Slave." And even as the book was a bestseller,

Douglass began receiving steady streams of threats to his life.

So he decided to embark on a 2-year lecture tour of the British Isles until things cooled down. He began by spending 4 months in Ireland, far from the threat of slave catchers, where he quickly found common ground with a people locked in their own struggle against oppression.

As Douglass wrote: "I have spent some of the happiest moments of my life since landing in this country. I seem to have undergone a transformation. I live a new life." It was at a Dublin rally that Douglass met the Irish nationalist Daniel O'Connell. And soon, the two struck up an unlikely friendship. O'Connell was a fierce opponent of slavery, and he began calling Douglass "the Black O'Connell of the United States." [*Laughter*]

For his part, Douglass drew inspiration from the Irishman's courage and intelligence, ultimately modeling his own struggle for justice on O'Connell's belief that change could be achieved peacefully through rule of law. Daniel O'Connell never lived to see another great emancipator named Abraham Lincoln put pen to paper and bring slavery to an end. But the two men shared a universal desire for freedom, one that cannot be contained by language or culture or even the span of an ocean.

And stories like this remind us just how deeply intertwined our two nations are. Nights like this remind us how much we share. And so as we celebrate together, let us take a moment to appreciate all that Ireland has given to America: the faith we keep, the family we hold close, the laughter and song and warmth we feel when surrounded by the ones we love.

On behalf of the American people, I want to thank the people of Ireland. In the years ahead, may our sons and daughters only grow closer. And now I would like to present to you the Taoiseach of Ireland. Happy St. Patrick's Day to all of you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:18 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Martin J. O'Malley of Maryland; Gov. Dannel P. Malloy of Connecticut; and Gov. Patrick J. Quinn III of Illinois. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Enda Kenny of Ireland.

Remarks on the Situation in Libya
March 18, 2011

Good afternoon, everybody. I want to take this opportunity to update the American people about the situation in Libya. Over the last several weeks, the world has watched events unfold in Libya with hope and alarm. Last month, protesters took to the streets across the country to demand their universal rights and a government that is accountable to them and responsive to their aspirations. But they were met with an iron fist.

Within days, whole parts of the country declared their independence from a brutal regime and members of the Government serving in Libya and abroad chose to align themselves with the forces of change. Muammar Qadhafi clearly lost the confidence of his own people and the legitimacy to lead.

Instead of respecting the rights of his own people, Qadhafi chose the path of brutal suppression. Innocent civilians were beaten, imprisoned, and in some cases killed. Peaceful protests were forcefully put down. Hospitals were attacked and patients disappeared. A campaign of intimidation and repression began.

In the face of this injustice, the United States and the international community moved swiftly. Sanctions were put in place by the United States and our allies and partners. The U.N. Security Council imposed further sanctions, an arms embargo, and the specter of international accountability for Qadhafi and those around him. Humanitarian assistance was positioned on Libya's borders, and those displaced by the violence received our help. Ample warning was given that Qadhafi needed

to stop his campaign of repression or be held accountable. The Arab League and the European Union joined us in calling for an end to violence.

Once again, Qadhafi chose to ignore the will of his people and the international community. Instead, he launched a military campaign against his own people. And there should be no doubt about his intentions because he himself has made them clear.

For decades, he's demonstrated a willingness to use brute force through his sponsorship of terrorism against the American people as well as others and through the killings that he has carried out within his own borders. And just yesterday, speaking of the city of Benghazi, a city of roughly 700,000 people, he threatened, and I quote, "We will have no mercy and no pity." No mercy on his own citizens.

Now, here's why this matters to us. Left unchecked, we have every reason to believe that Qadhafi would commit atrocities against his people. Many thousands could die. A humanitarian crisis would ensue. The entire region could be destabilized, endangering many of our allies and partners. The calls of the Libyan people for help would go unanswered. The democratic values that we stand for would be overrun. Moreover, the words of the international community would be rendered hollow.

And that's why the United States has worked with our allies and partners to shape a strong international response at the United Nations. Our focus has been clear: protecting innocent civilians within Libya and holding the Qadhafi regime accountable.

Yesterday, in response to a call for action by the Libyan people and the Arab League, the U.N. Security Council passed a strong resolution that demands an end to the violence against citizens. It authorizes the use of force with an explicit commitment to pursue all necessary measures to stop the killing, to include the enforcement of a no-fly zone over Libya. It also strengthens our sanctions and the enforcement of an arms embargo against the Qadhafi regime.

Now, once more, Muammar Qadhafi has a choice. The resolution that passed lays out very clear conditions that must be met. The United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Arab States agree that a cease-fire must be implemented immediately. That means all attacks against civilians must stop. Qadhafi must stop his troops from advancing on Benghazi, pull them back from Ajdabiya, Misurata, and Zawiyah, and establish water, electricity, and gas supplies to all areas. Humanitarian assistance must be allowed to reach the people of Libya.

Let me be clear: These terms are not negotiable. These terms are not subject to negotiation. If Qadhafi does not comply with the resolution, the international community will impose consequences and the resolution will be enforced through military action.

In this effort, the United States is prepared to act as part of an international coalition. American leadership is essential, but that does not mean acting alone. It means shaping the conditions for the international community to act together.

That's why I've directed Secretary Gates and our military to coordinate their planning, and tomorrow Secretary Clinton will travel to Paris for a meeting with our European allies and Arab partners about the enforcement of Resolution 1973. We will provide the unique capabilities that we can bring to bear to stop the violence against civilians, including enabling our European allies and Arab partners to effectively enforce a no-fly zone. I have no doubt that the men and women of our military are capable of carrying out this mission. Once more, they have the thanks of a grateful nation and the admiration of the world.

I also want to be clear about what we will not be doing. The United States is not going to deploy ground troops into Libya. And we are not going to use force to go beyond a well-defined goal, specifically, the protection of civilians in Libya. In the coming weeks, we will continue to help the Libyan people with humanitarian and economic assistance so that they can fulfill their aspirations peacefully.

Now, the United States did not seek this outcome. Our decisions have been driven by Qadhafi's refusal to respect the rights of his people and the potential for mass murder of

innocent civilians. It is not an action that we will pursue alone. Indeed, our British and French allies and members of the Arab League have already committed to take a leadership role in the enforcement of this resolution, just as they were instrumental in pursuing it. We are coordinating closely with them. And this is precisely how the international community should work as more nations bear both the responsibility and the cost of enforcing international law.

This is just one more chapter in the change that is unfolding across the Middle East and North Africa. From the beginning of these protests, we've made it clear that we are opposed to violence. We've made clear our support for a set of universal values and our support for the political and economic change that the people of the region deserve. But I want to be clear: The change in the region will not and cannot be imposed by the United States or any foreign power; ultimately, it will be driven by the people of the Arab world. It is their right and their responsibility to determine their own destiny.

Let me close by saying that there is no decision I face as your Commander in Chief that I consider as carefully as the decision to ask our men and women to use military force. Particularly at a time when our military is fighting in Afghanistan and winding down our activities in Iraq, that decision is only made more difficult. But the United States of America will not stand idly by in the face of actions that undermine global peace and security. So I've taken this decision with the confidence that action is necessary and that we will not be acting alone. Our goal is focused, our cause is just, and our coalition is strong.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:22 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya.

Statement on the Situation in Yemen
March 18, 2011

I strongly condemn the violence that has taken place in Yemen today and call on President Salih to adhere to his public pledge to allow demonstrations to take place peacefully. Those responsible for today's violence must be held accountable. The United States stands for a set of universal rights, including the freedom of expression and assembly, as well as political change that meets the aspirations of the Yemeni people. It is more important than ever for all sides to participate in an open and transparent process that addresses the legitimate concerns of the Yemeni people and provides a peaceful, orderly, and democratic path to a stronger and more prosperous nation.

The President's Weekly Address
March 19, 2011

In recent days, we've seen turmoil and tragedy around the world, from change in the Middle East and North Africa to the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. As I said on Friday, we will work with our partners in the region to protect innocent civilians in Libya and hold the Qadhafi regime accountable, and we will continue to stand with the people of Japan in their greatest hour of need.

As we respond to these immediate crises abroad, we also will not let up in our effort to tackle the pressing, ongoing challenges facing our country, including accelerating economic growth. That's why, over the weekend, I'll be in Latin America. One of the main reasons for my trip is to strengthen economic partnerships abroad so that we create good jobs here at home.

Latin America is a part of the world where the economy is growing very quickly. And as these markets grow, so does their demand for goods and services. The question is, where are those goods and services going to come from? As President, I want to make sure these products are made in America. I want to open more markets around the world so that American companies can do more business and hire more of our people.

Here's a statistic to explain why this is important: Every $1 billion of goods and services we export supports more than 5,000 jobs in the United States. So the more we sell overseas, the more jobs we create on our shores. That's why last year, I set a goal for this country: to double our exports by 2014. And it's a goal we're on track to meet.

Part of the reason why is the rapid growth of Latin America and their openness to American business. We now export more than three times as much to Latin America as we do to China, and our exports to the region will soon support more than 2 million jobs here in the United States.

Brazil, the first stop on our trip, is a great example. In 2010, America's exports to Brazil supported more than 250,000 American jobs. These are jobs at places like Capstone Turbine in California, which recently sold $2 million worth of high-tech energy equipment to Brazil. Another company is Rhino Assembly, a small business in Charlotte, North Carolina, that sells and repairs tools for building cars and planes. A deal with a distributor in Brazil has resulted in new sales and new employees at that firm. And we can point to large companies like Sikorsky, whose helicopter sales to Brazil help sustain a large, skilled workforce in Connecticut, Alabama, and Pennsylvania.

Today, Brazil imports more goods from the United States than from any other nation. And I'll be meeting with business leaders from both countries to talk about how we can create even more jobs by deepening these economic ties. After Brazil, I will also visit Chile, a country with a growing economy and increasing demand for American goods. In fact, since 2004, our exports there are up 300 percent and now support about 70,000 jobs in the United States. Finally, we'll head to El Salvador, a nation with so much promise for growth, with the potential to benefit both of our nations.

We've always had a special bond with our neighbors to the south. It's a bond born of shared history and values and strengthened by the millions of Americans who proudly trace their roots to Latin America. But what's clear is that in an increasingly global economy, our partnership with these nations is only going to become more vital. For it's a source of growth and prosperity, and not just for the people of Latin America, but for the American people as well.

Thanks.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:40 p.m. on March 18 in the Library at the White House for broadcast on March 19. In the address, the President referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 18, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 19.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil in Brasilia, Brazil
March 19, 2011

President Rousseff. Your Excellency Barack Obama, President of the United States of America; ladies and gentlemen; members of the delegation of the U.S. and of Brazil; ladies and gentlemen journalists; ladies and gentlemen.

Mr. President Obama, your visit to my country makes me very happy and arouses the best feelings of our people and honors the historic relationship between Brazil and the U.S. It bears also a very strong symbolic value.

The peoples of our countries have risen the largest—built the largest democracies of the Americas. They also dared to take at the highest level an Afro descent and a woman, demonstrating that the basis of democracy allows to overcome the largest barriers to build societies that will be more generous and live more in harmony.

Here, Mr. President, I am successor of a man that came from the people, my dear friend Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, where—for whom I had the honor to work with. His legacy, his most noble legacy, Mr. President, was to bring to the political scene and social scene millions of men and women that lived marginalized and lacked—were disenfranchised of their rights as citizens.

Of the nine heads of state of the U.S. that have visited officially Brazil, you are the one that sees our country in a most vibrant moment. The combination of a very serious economic policy with sound fundamentals and a consistent strategy of social inclusion has made our country one of the most dynamic markets of the world.

We have strengthened the renewable content of our energy matrix, and we have advanced in developing the environmental policies that protect our important rain forest reserves and also protects our very rich biodiversity. All this effort, Mr. President—President Obama, has created millions of new jobs and have dynamized many regions that before lived marginalized of the economic development. It has allowed Brazil to overcome with success the deepest economic crisis of recent history, keeping until the days of today record creation of new jobs.

But we still face enormous challenges. My administration at this moment is concentrating in the necessary tasks to improve our growth process and to guarantee the long period of prosperity for the Brazilian people.

My essential commitment is building a middle class income society, assuring educational, professional opportunities for the workers and for our immense youth population. I also want to guarantee an institutional environment that will trigger entrepreneurship and will favor productive investment.

My Government will work with dedication to overcome the shortcomings in terms of infrastructure, and we will make all our efforts to consolidate our clean energy, which is an essential, key asset of Brazil. So we will take the necessary steps to reach our place amongst the nations that have full, strong development with democracy and social fairness. This is—this point, President Obama, that I see the best opportunities for the advancements of the relations between our countries.

I follow very closely and I have high hopes on your efforts—your tremendous efforts to recover the vitality of the North American economy. We also have, as the rest of the world, one certainty, that the American people under your leadership will know how to find the best ways for the future of this great Nation.

The kindness of your visit here in the beginning of my administration and the long track record of friendship amongst our peoples have made me—possible to advance—and talk—and mention two issues that I consider central to the future partnerships that we can develop: education and innovation. Drawing closer ties and advancing in our educational experiments, enhancing our exchange programs, and building progress in all fields of knowledge is a key issue for the future of our countries.

On research and innovation, the U.S. has reached the most extraordinary accomplishments in the last decades, fostering the productivity in different economic sectors.

Brazil, Mr. President Obama, is in the—has some important cutting-edge technologies in certain fields, like genetics, biotechnology, renewable sources of energy, and the exploitation of oil in—the exploration of oil in deep waters. To combine our most advanced capabilities in the field of research and innovation certainly will yield the best fruits for our societies.

I would like to mention as an example the pre-salt, the deepwaters oil reserve, which is the longest cutting-edge borderline that Brazil has reached in terms of its technology. We believe that the enormous challenges that we'll face in each stage of exploration of this wealth

could gather an unprecedented convergence of knowledge accumulated by the best centers of research in our countries.

But, Mr. President, if we wish to build a relationship that will be much more in depth, it's necessary frankly to say—to deal about our contradictions. I am concerned especially with the acute effects that come from the economic imbalances that were created by the recent global financial meltdown. We understand the context and the efforts that was undertaken by your Government for the economic recovery of the U.S., something so important to the rest of the world. Nevertheless, everybody knows that broad-ranging measures sometimes provoke important changes in the relations of currencies around the world. This process is good economic practices and pushes countries towards protectionist measures and defensive measures of all nature.

We are a country that are making all the endeavors to come out of years of very low development rates. That's why we seek more fairness and balanced trade relations. And for us, it's fundamental that we should break away from the barriers that were arisen against our products, like ethanol, beef, cotton, orange juice, airplanes, and so on and so forth. For us, it's fundamental that we should expand the educational and technological partnerships for the future.

I am equally concerned with the slow pace of the reforms in the multilateral institutions that still reflect an old world. We work tirelessly for the reform in governance of the World Bank and of the IMF. And we did that by the U.S., together with Brazil, together with other countries, and we welcome the beginning of the changes that were undertaken in these multilateral institutions, although they're still very limited and belated due to the economic financial crisis.

We also advocated for fundamental reform in designing the global governance, the enhancement of the U.N. Security Council. Here, Mr. President, we're not moved by a minor interest of bureaucratic occupation of spaces of representation. What mobilizes us is the certainty that a world that is more multilateral will produce benefits for peace and harmony amongst the peoples of the world.

And even more, Mr. President, we're also interested to learn with our own mistakes. It was necessary—a very severe economic crisis—to move conservatism that blocked the reforms of the financial institutions. In the case of the U.N. reform, we now have the opportunities to act in advance.

This country, Brazil, has a commitment with peace, with democracy, and with consensus building. This commitment, it is not something that is transitory, but is part of our permanent values. Tolerance, dialogue, flexibility—these are principles that are written in our Constitution, in our history, and even in the nature of the Brazilian people. We're very proud to live in peace with all of our 10 neighbors of—for more than one century.

One week ago, Mr. President, we were in the effect of a consultative treaty of the South American Union of Nations, which will reinforce even more the unity of our continent. Brazil is redoubling efforts to consolidate peace, security, democracy, cooperation, and growth in this region with social fairness. And within this environment is that we should develop the relations between Brazil and the U.S.

Mr. President, I would like to say that I see with great optimism our common future. In the past, this relationship was very—many times was overshadowed by empty rhetoric that diluted what was truly at stake between the U.S. and Brazil. An alliance between our two countries, above all, if it intends to be a strategic alliance, is something that is a construct—a construct that is common, as you said yourself in your State of the Union very recently—when you delivered your State of the Union. But it has to be a construction amongst equals.

Nevertheless, the differences these countries may have in terms of the size of their territory, the population, productive capacity, or military might, we are countries of continental dimensions that follow the path of democracy. We are multiethnical in our territories, with different and rich cultures. Each one in their own way,

we have what a Brazilian poet called—we have "the feeling of the world," quote, unquote.

Your presence in Brazil, Mr. President, will be of great value in the construction that we want to do together.

Once again, President Obama, welcome to Brazil.

Moderator. Now I give the floor to the President of the United States. President Obama has the floor.

President Obama. Thank you, Madam President, for your very kind words. And thanks to you and the people of Brazil for the very warm welcome, that legendary Brazilian hospitality that you've shown me, Michelle, and our daughters. *Muito obrigado*.

President Rousseff. Thank you.

President Obama. Now, in our meeting today, I mentioned that this is my first visit to South America and Brazil is my first stop. This is no coincidence. The friendship between the people of the United States and Brazil spans nearly two centuries. Our entrepreneurs and businesses innovate together. Our scientists and researchers are pioneering new vaccines. Our students and teachers explore new horizons. And every day, we're working to make our societies more inclusive and more just.

Brazil's extraordinary rise, Madam President, has captured the attention of the world. Because of the sacrifices of people like President Rousseff, Brazil moved from dictatorship to democracy. As one of the world's fastest growing economies, Brazil has lifted tens of millions from poverty into a growing middle class.

Today, the United States and Brazil are the hemisphere's two largest democracies and the two largest economies. Brazil is a regional leader promoting greater cooperation across the Americas, and increasingly, Brazil is a global leader, a world leader, going from a recipient of foreign aid to a donor nation, pointing the way to a world without nuclear weapons, and being in the forefront of global efforts to confront climate change.

As President, I've pursued engagement based on mutual interest and mutual respect. And a key part of this engagement is forging deeper cooperation with 21st-century centers of influence, including Brazil. Put simply, the United States doesn't simply recognize Brazil's rise, we support it enthusiastically.

And that's why we've made the G–20 the world's premier forum of global economic cooperation, to make sure that nations like Brazil have a greater voice. That's why we've worked to increase Brazil's vote and role at international financial institutions, and it is why I've come to Brazil today.

President Rousseff and I both believe that this visit is a historic opportunity to put the United States and Brazil on a path towards even greater cooperation for decades to come. And today we're starting to seize that opportunity.

Madam President, I want to thank you for your strong personal commitment to strengthening the ties between our two nations. We're expanding trade and investment that create jobs in both our countries. Brazil is one of our largest trading partners, but there's still so much more that we can do.

Later today the President and I will be meeting with business leaders from our two countries to listen and find very concrete steps that we can take to expand our relationship economically. We'll be announcing a series of new agreements, including a new economic and financial dialogue to promote trade, streamline regulations, and expand collaborations in science and technology.

And as Brazil prepares to host the World Cup and the Summer Olympics—which still hurts for me to say—[*laughter*]—we're ensuring that American companies can play a role in the many infrastructure projects needed for these games.

We're creating a new strategic energy dialogue to make sure that the highest levels of our governments are working together to seize new opportunities. In particular, with the new oil finds off Brazil, President Rousseff has said that Brazil wants to be a major supplier of new stable sources of energy, and I've told her that the United States wants to be a major customer, which would be a win-win for both our countries.

At the same time, we're expanding our clean energy partnership that's vital to our long-term energy security. As a leader in renewable energy, such as biofuels, and as part of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas that I proposed, Brazil is sharing its expertise around the region and around the world. And the new green economy dialogue that we're creating today will deepen our cooperation even further in green buildings and sustainable development.

On the security front, our militaries are working more closely to respond to humanitarian crises, as we did together in Haiti. Our law enforcement communities are partnering against the narcotraffickers who threaten all of us. Brazil is joining the international effort to prevent nuclear smuggling through ports.

I thanked President Rousseff for Brazil's leadership towards establishing a new regional center to promote excellence in nuclear security. And as a member of the Human Rights Council, Brazil joined with us in condemning human rights abuses by Libya.

I want to briefly mention the situation in Libya, because this is something that I've discussed with the President. Yesterday the international community demanded an immediate ceasefire in Libya, including an end to all attacks against civilians. Today Secretary Clinton joined an international coalition of our European and Arab partners in Paris to discuss how we will enforce U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973.

Our consensus was strong, and our resolve is clear: The people of Libya must be protected. And in the absence of an immediate end to the violence against civilians, our coalition is prepared to act, and act with urgency. And I am briefing President Rousseff on the steps that we are taking.

Finally, I'm especially pleased that the United States and Brazil are joining together to advance development and democratic governance beyond our hemisphere. Brazil is helping lead the global initiative that I announced at the United Nations last year to promote open government and new technologies that empower citizens around the world. Today we're launching new efforts to help other countries combat corruption and prevent child labor, and we're expanding our efforts to promote food security and agricultural development in Africa.

I believe this is just the beginning of what our two countries can do together in the world. That's why the United States will continue our efforts to make sure that the new realities of the 21st century are reflected in international institutions, as Madam President mentioned, including the United Nations, where Brazil aspires to a seat on the Security Council.

As I told President Rousseff, the United States is going to keep working with Brazil and other nations on reforms that make the Security Council more effective, more efficient, more representative, and advance our shared vision of a more secure and peaceful world.

So again, with today's progress, I believe we've laid the foundation for greater cooperation between the United States and Brazil for decades to come. I want to thank President Rousseff for her leadership, for making this progress possible. I have not known Madam President long, but I can tell, in speaking to her, the extraordinary passion she has for providing opportunity for all the people of Brazil, lifting everyone up. And that's a passion I share with respect to my citizens in the United States—my fellow citizens in the United States of America.

So I am confident that given this shared spirit, this camaraderie that exists not only at our levels, but among our peoples, that we are going to continue to make progress for a long time to come.

I'm very much looking forward to visiting Rio tomorrow and the opportunity to speak directly to the Brazilian people about what our countries can do together as global partners in the 21st century.

Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:54 p.m. at the Palacio do Planalto. President Rousseff and a moderator spoke in Portuguese, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks During the United States-Brazil CEO Forum in Brasilia
March 19, 2011

I just want to begin by thanking President Rousseff for her extraordinary hospitality. To the Brazilian companies who are here, many of whom have investments in the United States, we're grateful for the dialogue with our colleagues from the north.

As I stated in the statement that I just made before coming here, Brazil is on the rise. And the United States is excited and fully supportive of Brazil's rapid expansion, its extraordinary talent, its resources, its enormous potential that's now being realized, in part because of the outstanding leadership of President Rousseff.

And I think the goal today—so I'm not going to speak long—is simply to make sure that we were helping to facilitate an effective dialogue. I know that there are a couple of areas where we're going to be announcing agreements: an agreement on trade and economic cooperation, an open skies agreement. I know those are two issues that everybody was advocating and we're going to announce them today, so we're pleased to do that. I know there's been some work done on extending visas for both countries, and although we haven't gotten all that worked through, we are making progress, and we will continue to do so.

Brazil is going to be hosting several important sporting events over the next few years. I mentioned that it pains me to say this when it comes to the Olympics because—[*laughter*]—Lula beat me on that one. [*Laughter*] But we want to make sure that through this forum, companies that have both an expertise on security and infrastructure, that they will potentially participate.

On energy, obviously, Brazil is a major player on the world stage——

[*At this point, the press pool was escorted out of the room. The forum continued, but no transcript was provided.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:33 p.m. at the Palacio do Itamaraty. In his remarks, he referred to President Dilma Rousseff and former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil in Brasilia
March 19, 2011

President Rousseff, to all the distinguished guests, elected officials, business leaders who are here, I want to thank you so much, not only for your very kind words, but for the extraordinary hospitality that you and the Brazilian people have shown me, Michelle, and our daughters. You've shown us the essence of the Brazilian spirit, which is truly *simpatico*.

We gather here at one of the city's most magnificent structures, which speaks to the creativity and the ingenuity and vision of Brazil and its people. It calls to mind the words of President Kubitschek, who said, "What is Brasilia if not the dawn of a new day for Brazil?" In our lives we've seen that new day come to pass. Because of the sacrifices and courage of Brazilians like Madam President, you have built a vibrant democracy. Because of the hard work and determination of the Brazilian people—parents, students, entrepreneurs—you've built a thriving economy. Future historians will surely record Brazil's rise as one of the great achievements of our time.

As I said earlier today, the United States doesn't simply welcome Brazil's rise; we want to help in any ways that we can to realize Brazil's full potential. When you look at what our two countries share, as President Rousseff mentioned—our belief in the dignity of every individual, our confidence that if we put our minds to it there's nothing we can't do, the incredible diversity of our peoples, our sense of

responsibility to not only people within our borders, but people beyond our borders—well, it's only natural that we would end up being close partners. We can go further together.

Madam President, today we have seized an historic opportunity. We've laid a foundation for greater cooperation and partnership between our nations for decades to come. And I firmly believe that this will mean more dignity, more prosperity, and more security, not only for the peoples of our two nations, but for people across Latin America and around the world.

So I propose a toast. Recalling those words from President Kubitschek: To the new day in Brazil, may the sunlight of progress and peace always shine upon you. *Salude.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:13 p.m. at the Palacio do Itamaraty. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Rousseff.

Remarks to the Brazil-United States Business Council Summit in Brasilia
March 19, 2011

Boa tarde. Thank you very much. Please, please, everybody be seated. It is a great joy to be here in Brazil. And on behalf of Michelle and myself, I want to thank the people of Brasilia for the incredibly warm welcome that you've shown us since we arrived.

I want to make a few acknowledgements. First of all, I want to thank the Brazil-U.S. Business Council for the outstanding work that they're doing: the National Conference of Industry and the American Chamber of Commerce for Brazil. Thank you all for the great job in hosting this conference.

I want to acknowledge a number of my Cabinet who are here: the Secretary of the Treasury, Timothy Geithner, is here; Gary Locke, the Secretary of Commerce; Ron Kirk, our U.S. Trade Representative; Lisa Jackson, our EPA Administrator; Fred Hochberg, President of the Export-Import Bank; Michael Froman, my Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs. And to all the Government officials of Brazil, thank you for your hospitality.

My only regret is that we missed the party by coming a few weeks after Carnival. [*Laughter*] Maybe that's the best, since I'm not sure I would have had the same level of productivity from my staff. [*Laughter*]

I also want to thank all the business and Government officials who have traveled from the U.S. and all over Brazil to be here today. After spending the morning discussing a range of economic issues with President Rousseff and talking with some Brazilian and American CEOs, I want to speak with you today about how we can work together to create new jobs and new opportunities in both our countries.

In the last two centuries, there has never been a moment of greater promise for Brazil. You now have the seventh largest economy in the world and one of the fastest growing of any country. In the span of nearly a decade, tens of millions of Brazilians have been lifted out of poverty. Nearly half of your population is now considered middle class. Instead of relying on the helping hand of other countries, you are now extending a hand to help developing nations. You grow much of the world's food, supply much of its biofuels, and will host the two largest international sporting events in the world. And as I mentioned at the joint press conference with Madam President Rousseff, I'm still a little hurt about the Olympics coming here instead of my hometown in Chicago. [*Laughter*] But I know you'll do an outstanding job.

So what has been accomplished here in Brazil is nothing short of remarkable. It's often said that Brazil is a country for the future. Well, that future has now arrived. And despite the uncertainties of the last 2 years, Brazil has stepped onto the world stage as a major financial and economic power.

You did not arrive at this point by simply chance or good fortune. Your success came because of hard work and the perseverance of the Brazilian people, the entrepreneurial spirit of

many in this room, and the vision of leaders like Presidents Cardoso and Lula. What these leaders realized and what President Rousseff understands is that the surest path to prosperity for Brazil involves free people and free markets.

In a region of the world where the legacy of colonialism is still fresh, there was a legitimate concern in the last century that opening your economies to more trade would lead wealthier countries to extract resources without regard to your own nation's development. I understand that. At the same time, many Latin American nations, including this one, lived through decades of dictatorships, where closed economies failed to produce decent standards of living for the vast majority of people.

But over the last decade, Brazil has proved the world that there is another way. You've shown that participation in the global economy can lead to widespread opportunity at home. You've shown that the spirit of capitalism can thrive alongside the spirit of social justice. You've shown that democracy is still the best path to economic progress, for when governments are accountable to their people, their people are more likely to prosper.

In the United States of America, we have always shared these beliefs. Like you, we threw off the yoke of colonialism and established our independence in the New World. We too are a vast nation of immigrants, from different backgrounds and cultures, who find strength in our diversity, strength and unity in our national pride. And as the two largest democracies and economies in the Western Hemisphere, we share a belief that all human beings deserve the chance to shape their own destiny and fulfill their God-given potential.

For all these reasons, the United States supports the rise of Brazil as a global power. That's why we worked to empower the G–20, where Brazil has a prominent seat at the table, to be the premier forum for international economic cooperation. That's why we supported a bigger role for Brazil in various international institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. And that's why Brazil is my first stop on my first trip to South America, because we seek a deeper partnership with your Government and a closer friendship with your people. We believe that strengthening our economy—economic ties will create new jobs and opportunities for both of our nations.

As the United States looks to Brazil, we see the chance to sell more goods and services to a rapidly growing market of around 200 million consumers. And for us, this is a jobs strategy. When our businesses send more products overseas, it supports the workers who make and sell those products. Now, I think most American businessmen who are here understand this. For every $1 billion in U.S. exports, we see 5,000 U.S. jobs.

Already our exports to Brazil have more than doubled over the last 5 years, growing twice as fast as our overall exports and faster than our exports to China. We now sell $50 billion worth of goods and services to Brazil, and those sales support more than 250,000 jobs in the United States.

For example, after one small business in North Carolina attended a trade forum in Sao Paulo last year, they came away with a manufacturing deal that sent auto parts to Brazil and led to the hiring of new workers in the United States. Capstone Turbine in California recently sold $2 million worth of high-tech energy equipment that will support jobs in America and serve millions of Brazilians in the years to come. And the Government of Brazil recently purchased helicopters that will support U.S. manufacturing jobs from Pennsylvania to Alabama.

These exports don't just mean jobs for the United States, they also mean more services and more choices for the people of Brazil. From telecommunication and information services to machinery and clean energy technology, American companies are contributing to the economic growth that is raising the living standards of Brazilians everywhere. And our businesses don't just make that contribution by exporting to Brazil, but also through billions of dollars in direct investment that supports jobs and businesses in both our countries.

Of course, our economic relationship isn't just a one-way street of U.S. exports and U.S. investment. The United States is the second largest market for Brazilian exports, supporting

tens of thousands of jobs and businesses in this country. Over the last decade, Brazilian companies have invested billions of dollars in American industries, ranging from steel to information technology, projects that will create thousands of jobs in the United States. At the end of 2008, U.S. subsidiaries of Brazilian firms employed more than 42,000 U.S. workers.

So there is no question that the United States and Brazil benefit from the economic ties we've developed over the years. There's also no question that strengthening those ties would be a win-win for both our nations. And I'd like to mention four areas where I think we can do just that.

First of all, I'm pleased to announce that President Rousseff and I just completed an agreement for a new economic and financial dialogue. It's time for the United States to treat our engagement with Brazil on economic issues as seriously as we do with nations like China and India. And this dialogue will help us do that by promoting economic cooperation, streamlining regulations, and enhancing international cooperation not only at the G–20, but elsewhere.

We've also completed an agreement for trade and economic cooperation, which will help us expand the trade and investment that creates jobs in both of our countries. This agreement will also foster greater dialogue about how we can break down the barriers that still exist between our two nations. As the World Bank has noted, there are still too many obstacles in the way of doing business in Brazil. And I know Brazil has issues with certain policies in the United States. But I also know that there's no country that has more to gain than Brazil from expanded trade and open markets. And we want to help you resolve whatever challenges stand in the way of this goal.

The second place we want to partner with Brazil is on the issue of energy, which is why President Rousseff and I also agreed to launch a strategic energy dialogue. By some estimates, the oil you recently discovered off the shores of Brazil could amount to twice the reserves we have in the United States. We want to work with you. We want to help with technology and support to develop these oil reserves safely. And when you're ready to start selling, we want to be one of your best customers. At a time when we've been reminded how easily instability in other parts of the world can affect the price of oil, the United States could not be happier with the potential for a new, stable source of energy.

Now, even as we focus on oil in the near term, we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that the only long-term solution to the world's dependence on fossil fuels is clean energy technology. And that's why the United States and Brazil are deepening our cooperation on biofuels and why we're launching a U.S.-Brazil Green Economy Partnership, because we know that the development of clean energy is one of the best ways to create new jobs and industries in both our nations.

Already more than half of the vehicles in Brazil run on biofuels. Nearly 80 percent of your electricity comes from hydropower. In the United States, we've jump-started a clean energy industry, and we'll soon have the capacity to produce 40 percent of the world's advanced batteries. If we can start sharing these new technologies and leverage private investment from businesses like the ones in this room, we can grow our economies and clean our environment by making, using, trading, selling clean energy products all over the world. That is a win for both our nations.

A third place we can cooperate is education. I was speaking over lunch with President Rousseff, and we agreed a knowledge-based economy will be the key to growth and prosperity, and that means a skilled and educated workforce. The more our young people, the more our students, the more our workers are exposed to new cultures and new ideas, the more equipped they'll be able—they'll be to compete on a global scale. And that's why I'm so pleased that American and Brazilian business leaders have expressed interest in increasing student exchanges between our nations, because when we invest in our people, we invest in our future.

The final place we can work together is on infrastructure. In 2014, the World Cup will

take place in Brazil, the only nation that's a five-time champion, although the U.S. is getting better, you have to admit. [*Laughter*] We're getting better. And as I already mentioned, Rio will host the Olympics in 2016. But even though we lost a hard-fought contest, the United States doesn't just want to watch from the stands. Brazil's expected to invest over $200 billion to prepare for both of these events. And as you look for businesses to design and build new roads and bridges and stadiums, American companies stand ready to help you meet this challenge, on everything from engineering to manufacturing to construction. We want to see these games and this nation succeed.

So these are just some of the steps we can take to strengthen the ties that bind our two nations, ties that offer the promise of greater prosperity and opportunity for Americans and Brazilians alike. And yet for all the deals and agreements that we may sign, the true potential of our partnership will only be realized by forging relationships between our people: between business leaders, entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers, teachers, students, and over the one—over 1 million citizens who travel to the U.S. and Brazil every year.

Like all friends, we may not agree on every issue. We won't always take the exact same path. But as the two largest democracies in the New World begin the second decade of a young century, let's never forget all that we share.

In the United States, we believe in what's known as the American Dream, the idea that no matter who you are or where you come from or how you start out, you can overcome the greatest obstacles and fulfill the greatest hopes. I'm a testament to that dream. I believe that that dream exists in this America as well. I can see it in the entrepreneurial spirit of the men and women in this room. I could see it in the celebrations of Caricoas upon learning that the world will come to compete in Rio. And I can see it running through so much of your history.

Brasilia's a young city; it will turn 51 next month. But it began as a dream more than a century ago. In 1883, Dom Bosco, Brasilia's patron saint, had a vision that one day a capital city of a great nation would be built between the 15th and 20th parallels. It would be a model for the future and ensure that opportunity was the birthright of every Brazilian.

And today, this city and this country are indeed a model for the future, showing the world that democracy is still the best partner of human progress. As friends and neighbors who have lived the same story, we are eager to be a part of your future and fulfill our American Dream together.

Muito obrigado. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:04 p.m. at the Tryp Convention Brasil 21 Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Dilma Rousseff and former Presidents Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil.

Remarks on the Situation in Libya From Brasilia
March 19, 2011

Good afternoon, everybody. Today I authorized the Armed Forces of the United States to begin a limited military action in Libya in support of an international effort to protect Libyan civilians. That action has now begun.

In this effort, the United States is acting with a broad coalition that is committed to enforcing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973, which calls for the protection of the Libyan people. That coalition met in Paris today to send a unified message, and it brings together many of our European and Arab partners.

This is not an outcome that the United States or any of our partners sought. Even yesterday, the international community offered Muammar Qadhafi the opportunity to pursue an immediate ceasefire, one that stopped the

violence against civilians and the advances of Qadhafi's forces. But despite the hollow words of his Government, he has ignored that opportunity. His attacks on his own people have continued. His forces have been on the move. And the danger faced by the people of Libya has grown.

I am deeply aware of the risks of any military action, no matter what limits we place on it. I want the American people to know that the use of force is not our first choice, and it's not a choice that I make lightly. But we cannot stand idly by when a tyrant tells his people that there will be no mercy, and his forces step up their assaults on cities like Benghazi and Misurata, where innocent men and women face brutality and death at the hands of their own Government.

So we must be clear: Actions have consequences, and the writ of the international community must be enforced. That is the cause of this coalition.

As a part of this effort, the United States will contribute our unique capabilities at the front end of the mission to protect Libyan civilians and enable the enforcement of a no-fly zone that will be led by our international partners. And as I said yesterday, we will not—I repeat—we will not deploy any U.S. troops on the ground.

As Commander in Chief, I have great confidence in the men and women of our military who will carry out this mission. They carry with them the respect of a grateful nation.

I'm also proud that we are acting as part of a coalition that includes close allies and partners who are prepared to meet their responsibility to protect the people of Libya and uphold the mandate of the international community.

I've acted after consulting with my national security team and Republican and Democratic leaders of Congress. And in the coming hours and days, my administration will keep the American people fully informed. But make no mistake: Today, we are part of a broad coalition. We are answering the calls of a threatened people. And we are acting in the interests of the United States and the world.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:07 p.m. at the Tryp Convention Brasil 21 Center. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya.

Statement on the Death of Warren M. Christopher
March 19, 2011

Michelle and I were saddened to hear that Warren Christopher has passed away. Deeply dedicated to serving his country, Warren's career ranged from the Naval Reserve in World War II to a clerkship at the Supreme Court to the practice of law and politics in California and Washington. And as President Clinton's Secretary of State, he was a resolute pursuer of peace, leading negotiations with regard to the Middle East and the Balkans, including the Dayton Agreement, which ended the war in Bosnia. Warren Christopher was a skillful diplomat, a steadfast public servant, and a faithful American. We send our thoughts and prayers to his wife Marie and their children.

Remarks in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
March 20, 2011

The President. Hello, Rio de Janeiro!

Audience members. Hello!

Audience member. Many welcomes!

The President. *Alo*, *Cidade Maravilhoso*! *Boa tarde, todo o povo brasileiro*.

Since the moment we arrived, the people of this nation have graciously shown my family the warmth and generosity of the Brazilian spirit. *Obrigado*. Thank you. And I want to give a special thanks for you—to all of you for being

here, because I've been told that there's a Vasco football game coming—Botafogo.

Audience members. [*Applause*]

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Botafogo? [*Laughter*] So I know that—I realize Brazilians don't give up their soccer very easily. [*Laughter*]

Now, one of my earliest impressions of Brazil was a movie I saw with my mother as a very young child, a movie called "Black Orpheus," that is set in the *favelas* of Rio during Carnival. And my mother loved that movie, with its singing and dancing against the backdrop of the beautiful green hills. And it first premiered as a play right here in Theatro Municipal. That's my understanding.

And my mother is gone now, but she would have never imagined that her son's first trip to Brazil would be as President of the United States. She would have never imagined that. And I never imagined that this country would be even more beautiful than it was in the movie. You are, as Jorge Ben Jor sang, "A tropical country, blessed by God, and beautiful by nature."

I've seen that beauty in the cascading hillsides, in your endless miles of sand and ocean, and in the vibrant, diverse gatherings of *brasileiros* who have come here today.

And we have a wonderfully mixed group. We have Cariocas and Paulistas, Baianas, Mineiros. We've got men and women from the cities to the interior, and so many young people here who are the great future of this great nation.

Now, yesterday I met with your wonderful new President, Dilma Rousseff, and talked about how we can strengthen the partnership between our governments. But today I want to speak directly to the Brazilian people about how we can strengthen the friendship between our nations. I've come here to share some ideas because I want to speak of the values that we share, the hopes that we have in common, and the difference that we can make together.

When you think about it, the journeys of the United States of America and Brazil began in similar ways. Our lands are rich with God's creation, home to ancient and indigenous peoples. From overseas, the Americas were discovered by men who sought a New World and settled by pioneers who pushed westward across vast frontiers. We became colonies claimed by distant crowns, but soon declared our independence. We then welcomed waves of immigrants to our shores, and eventually, after a long struggle, we cleansed the stain of slavery from our land.

The United States was the first nation to recognize Brazil's independence and set up a diplomatic outpost in this country. The first head of state to visit the United States was the leader of Brazil, Dom Pedro II. In the Second World War, our brave men and women fought side by side for freedom. And after the war, both of our nations struggled to achieve the full blessings of liberty.

On the streets of the United States, men and women marched and bled and some died so that every citizen could enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities, no matter what you looked like, no matter where you came from.

In Brazil, you fought against two decades of dictatorships for the same right to be heard, the right to be free from fear, free from want. And yet, for years, democracy and development were slow to take hold, and millions suffered as a result.

But I come here today because those days have passed. Brazil today is a flourishing democracy, a place where people are free to speak their mind and choose their leaders, where a poor kid from Pernambuco can rise from the floors of a copper factory to the highest office in Brazil.

Over the last decade, the progress made by the Brazilian people has inspired the world. More than half of this nation is now considered middle class. Millions have been lifted from poverty. For the first time, hope is returning to places where fear had long prevailed. I saw this today when I visited Cidade de Deus, the City of God.

It isn't just the new security efforts and social programs—and I want to congratulate the mayor and the Governor for the excellent work that they're doing—but it's also a change in attitudes. As one young resident said, "People have to look at *favelas* not with pity, but as a

source of Presidents and lawyers and doctors, artists, and people with solutions."

With each passing day, Brazil is a country with more solutions. In the global community, you've gone from relying on the help of other nations to now helping fight poverty and disease wherever they exist. You play an important role in the global institutions that protect our common security and promote our common prosperity. And you will welcome the world to your shores when the World Cup and the Olympic Games come to Rio de Janeiro.

Now, you may be aware that this city was not my first choice for the Summer Olympics. [*Laughter*] But if the games could not be held in Chicago, then there's no place I'd rather see them than right here in Rio. And I intend to come back in 2016 to watch what happens.

For so long, Brazil was a nation brimming with potential but held back by politics, both at home and abroad. For so long, you were called a country of the future, told to wait for a better day that was always just around the corner. *Meus amigos*, that day has finally come. And this is a country of the future no more. The people of Brazil should know that the future has arrived. It is here now. And it's time to seize it.

Now, our countries have not always agreed on everything. And just like many nations, we're going to have our differences of opinion going forward. But I'm here to tell you that the American people don't just recognize Brazil's success, we root for Brazil's success. As you confront the many challenges you still face at home as well as abroad, let us stand together, not as senior and junior partners, but as equal partners, joined in a spirit of mutual interest and mutual respect, committed to the progress that I know that we can make together. I'm confident we can do it.

Together, we can advance our common prosperity. As two of the world's largest economies, we worked side by side during the financial crisis to restore growth and confidence. And to keep our economies going—growing, we know what's necessary in both of our nations. We need a skilled, educated workforce, which is why American and Brazilian companies have pledged to help increase student exchanges between our two nations. We need a commitment to innovation and technology, which is why we've agreed to expand cooperation between our scientists, researchers, and engineers. We need world-class infrastructure, which is why American companies want to help you build and prepare this city for Olympic success.

In a global economy, the United States and Brazil should expand trade, expand investment, so that we create new jobs and new opportunities in both of our nations. And that's why we're working to break down barriers to doing business. That's why we're building closer relationships between our workers and our entrepreneurs.

Together, we can also promote energy security and protect our beautiful planet. As two nations that are committed to greener economies, we know that the ultimate solution to our energy challenges lies in clean and renewable power. And that's why half the vehicles in this country can run on biofuels and most of your electricity comes from hydropower. That's also why, in the United States, we've jump-started a new clean energy industry. And that's why the United States and Brazil are creating new energy partnerships, to share technologies, create new jobs, and leave our children a world that is cleaner and safer than we found it.

Together, our two nations can also help defend our citizens' security. We're working together to stop narcotrafficking that has destroyed too many lives in this hemisphere. We seek the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We're working together to enhance nuclear security across our hemisphere. From Africa to Haiti, we are working side by side to combat the hunger, disease, and corruption that can rot a society and rob human beings of dignity and opportunity. And as two countries that have been greatly enriched by our African heritage, it's absolutely vital that we are working with the continent of Africa to help lift it up. That is something that we should be committed to doing together.

Today, we're both also delivering assistance and support to the Japanese people at their greatest hour of need. The ties that bind our

nations to Japan are strong. In Brazil, you are home to the largest Japanese population outside of Japan. In the United States, we've forged an alliance of more than 60 years. The people of Japan are some of our closest friends, and we will pray with them and stand with them and rebuild with them until this crisis has passed.

In these and other efforts to promote peace and prosperity throughout the world, the United States and Brazil are partners not just because we share history, not just because we're in the same hemisphere, not just because we share ties of commerce and culture, but also because we share certain enduring values and ideals.

We both believe in the power and promise of democracy. We believe that no other form of government is more effective at promoting growth and prosperity that reaches every human being, not just some, but all. And those who argue otherwise, those who argue that democracy stands in the way of economic progress, they must contend with the example of Brazil.

The millions in this country who have climbed from poverty into the middle class, they did not do so in a closed economy controlled by the state. You're prospering as a free people with open markets and a government that answers to its citizens. You're proving that the goal of social justice and social inclusion can be best achieved through freedom, that democracy is the greatest partner of human progress.

We also believe that in nations as big and diverse as ours, shaped by generations of immigrants from every race and faith and background, democracy offers the best hope that every citizen is treated with dignity and respect and that we can resolve our differences peacefully, that we find strength in our diversity.

We know that experience in the United States. We know how important it is to be able to work together, even when we often disagree. I understand that our chosen form of government can be slow and messy. We understand that democracy must be constantly strengthened and perfected over time. We know that different nations take different paths to realize the promise of democracy. And we understand that no one nation should impose its will on another.

But we also know that there's certain aspirations shared by every human being. We all seek to be free. We all seek to be heard. We all yearn to live without fear or discrimination. We all yearn to choose how we are governed. And we all want to shape our own destiny. These are not American ideals or Brazilian ideals. These are not Western ideals. These are universal rights, and we must support them everywhere.

Today, we are seeing the struggle for these rights unfold across the Middle East and North Africa. We've seen a revolution born out of a yearning for basic human dignity in Tunisia. We've seen peaceful protestors pour into Tahrir Square: men and women, young and old, Christian and Muslim. We've seen the people of Libya take a courageous stand against a regime determined to brutalize its own citizens. Across the region, we've seen young people rise up, a new generation demanding the right to determine their own future.

From the beginning, we have made clear that the change they seek must be driven by their own people. But for our two nations, for the United States and Brazil, two nations who have struggled over many generations to perfect our own democracies, the United States and Brazil know that the future of the Arab world will be determined by its people.

No one can say for certain how this change will end, but I do know that change is not something that we should fear. When young people insist that the currents of history are on the move, the burdens of the past can be washed away. When men and women peacefully claim their human rights, our own common humanity is enhanced. Wherever the light of freedom is lit, the world becomes a brighter place.

That is the example of Brazil. [*Applause*] That is the example of Brazil. Brazil, a country that shows that a dictatorship can become a thriving democracy; Brazil, a country that shows democracy delivers both freedom and opportunity to its people; Brazil, a country that

shows how a call for change that starts in the streets can transform a city, transform a country, transform a world.

Decades ago, it was directly outside of this theater in Cinelandia Square where the call for change was heard in Brazil. Students and artists and political leaders of all stripes would gather with banners that said, "Down with the dictatorship." "The people in power." Their democratic aspirations would not be fulfilled until years later, but one of the young Brazilians in that generation's movement would go on to forever change the history of this country.

A child of an immigrant, her participation in the movement led to her arrest and her imprisonment, her torture at the hands of her own Government. And so she knows what it's like to live without the most basic human rights that so many are fighting for today. But she also knows what it is to persevere. She knows what it is to overcome, because today that woman is your nation's President, Dilma Rousseff.

Our two nations face many challenges. On the road ahead, we will certainly encounter many obstacles. But in the end, it is our history that gives us hope for a better tomorrow. It is the knowledge that the men and women who came before us have triumphed over greater trials than these, that we live in places where ordinary people have done extraordinary things.

It's that sense of possibility, that sense of optimism that first drew pioneers to this New World. It's what binds our nations together as partners in this new century. It's why we believe, in the words of Paulo Coelho, one of your most famous writers, "With the strength of our love and our will, we can change our destiny, as well as the destiny of many others."

Muito obrigado. Thank you. And may God bless our two nations. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:56 p.m. at the Theatro Municipal. In his remarks, he referred to Brazilian musician Jorge Ben Jor; former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil; Mayor Eduardo Paes of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Governor Sergio Cabral of Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil. He also referred to the Club de Regatas Vasco da Gama and the Botafogo de Futebol e Regatas soccer teams.

Videotaped Remarks on the Observance of Nowruz
March 20, 2011

Today I want to extend my best wishes to all who are celebrating Nowruz here in the United States and around the world.

Each year of my Presidency, I have marked this holiday by speaking directly to the people of Iran. That is what I would like to do once more.

This is a holiday for the Iranian people to spend time with friends and family, to reflect on the extraordinary blessings that you enjoy, and to look forward to the promise of a new day. After all, this is a season of hope and renewal. And today, we know that this is also a season of promise across the Middle East and North Africa, even as there are also enormous challenges.

I believe that there are certain values that are universal: the freedom of peaceful assembly and association, the ability to speak your mind and choose your leaders. And what we are seeing across the region is the insistence on governments that are accountable to the people.

But we also know that these movements for change are not unique to these last few months. The same forces of hope that swept across Tahrir Square were seen in Azadi Square in June of 2009. And just as the people of the region have insisted that they have a choice in how they are governed, so do the governments of the region have a choice in their response.

So far, the Iranian Government has responded by demonstrating that it cares far more about preserving its own power than respecting the rights of the Iranian people.

For nearly 2 years, there has been a campaign of intimidation and abuse. Young and old, men and women, rich and poor, the Iranian

people have been persecuted. Hundreds of prisoners of conscience are in jail. The innocent have gone missing. Journalists have been silenced. Women tortured. Children sentenced to death.

The world has watched these unjust actions with alarm. We have seen Nasrin Sotoudeh jailed for defending human rights; Jafar Panahi imprisoned and unable to make his films; Abdolreza Tajik thrown in jail for being a journalist; the Baha'i community and Sufi Muslims punished for their faith; Mohammad Valian, a young student, sentenced to death for throwing three stones.

These choices do not demonstrate strength, they show fear. For it is telling when a government is so afraid of its own citizens that it won't even allow them the freedom to access information or to communicate with each other. But the future of Iran will not be shaped by fear. The future of Iran belongs to the young people, the youth who will determine their own destiny.

Over 60 percent of the Iranian people were born after 1979. You are not bound by the chains of the past: the distracting hatred of America that will create no jobs or opportunity, the rigid and unaccountable government, the refusal to let the Iranian people realize their full potential for fear of undermining the authority of the state.

Instead, you—the young people of Iran—carry within you both the ancient greatness of Persian civilization and the power to forge a country that is responsive to your aspirations. Your talent, your hopes, and your choices will shape the future of Iran and help light the world. And though times may seem dark, I want you to know that I am with you.

On this day, a celebration that serves as a bridge from the past to the future, I would like to close with a quote from the poet Simin Behbahani, a woman who has been banned from traveling beyond Iran, even though her words have moved the world: "Old I may be, but given the chance, I will learn. I will begin a second youth alongside my progeny. I will recite the Hadith of love of country with such fervor as to make each word bear life."

Let this be a season of second youth for all Iranians, a time in which a new season bears new life once more. Thank you. And *Aid-eh-Shoma Mobarak*.

NOTE: The remarks were recorded at approximately 3:40 p.m. on March 18 in the Library at the White House for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 20. The Office of the Press Secretary also released Arabic and Persian transcripts of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile in Santiago, Chile
March 21, 2011

President Pinera. Good afternoon, everyone. Firstly, I would like to cordially and heartily welcome a friend of Chile and a personal friend like President Obama. I think that your visit, President, is very important and has enormous significance for Chile. It's the first time in more than 20 years that a President of the United States visits our country.

Of course, we've had several multilateral summits of world leaders, and this visit coincides with the celebration of 50 years of the Alliance for Progress that was announced by President Kennedy at the beginning of the sixties.

We have had with President Obama a very open, frank, and fruitful conversation, and we have been able to subscribe many agreements of different nature, but they do have something in common. They all contribute to a better life and better quality of life for our peoples, like trade promotion and to accelerate and perfect the free trade agreement we have with the United States; cooperation in the field of education and English teaching as—in order

to make of Chile a bilingual country; collaboration in the developments and efficient use of energies, and cleaner energies in particular, renewable energies, where Chile has enormous potential; and also collaboration in research technologies and training of our engineers and technicians in nuclear energy.

But I want to be very clear and adamant: Chile is not going to build, nor is it planning to build, any nuclear power plants during our government, during our administration. The idea of this agreement is that we may understand much better nuclear technologies, to be able to train our engineers and technicians so that in the future we may make more informed decisions, more intelligent decisions protecting the health and life of our population, the environment, and nature, and also that will allow us to ensure that the operation of our two experimental nuclear power plants be fully, fully safe.

Also, we have signed agreements to collaborate in natural disasters, in early warning mechanisms, and effective aid and rescue of civil populations. We have much to learn from—in situations like FEMA in the United States.

Another agreement is something addressing the only renewable resource of modern times—science, technology and innovation, and entrepreneurship—that we need to strengthen in our countries so as to reach the development stage that we are seeking. And then, finally, the agreements to better protect our nature, our environment.

I want to tell you, President Obama, that when you announced your visit to Chile, Brazil, and El Salvador on the occasion of your State of the Union Address, you said you were coming to forge new partnerships for the progress of the Americas, and you said that throughout all the world, you were committed to those countries that assume their responsibilities. Frankly, I think that Chile has assumed and will continue to assume its responsibility with our fate, with our region, with our country, and to the extent possible, with the rest of the world.

And as we have been able to evidence in our conversations, not only today, but also in your country and in Asia, we have discovered that our two nations have a road of collaboration that can be built on rock and not on sand, because we coincide in that which is key: the values, the principles, the vision. That facilitates the road. And with that we can convincingly embrace this new alliance, this new partnership between the United States of America and the rest of the American countries—we are all Americans—an alliance that should be much deeper and forward looking than the Alliance for Progress. And this partnership, this alliance is one of our times, of our 21st century, of the society of information and technology.

President Obama, Chile has set for itself an ambitious goal before the end of this decade: to leave underdevelopment behind, to defeat poverty and to build a society of opportunities and assurance for all of its sons and daughters, and also to achieve a strong alliance among equals, with the same rights, obligations of Latin America with the United States. And this is going to be very powerful, very useful in many fields: promotion of world peace, perfecting of democracy, rule of law, and defense of human rights, but also in economic integration, where Chile aspires to accelerate, perfect, and deepen our free trade agreement with the United States.

Also, we would like to raise our voice to ask for countries like Colombia and Panama also to have free trade agreements with your country and may join in this Trans-Pacific Partnership initiative. It's going to be a free trade area on both sides of the Pacific Ocean and where we will find the largest free trade market in the world.

Also, we are concerned about the delays and tensions of the Doha round. I know that the United States is going to make efforts for this to move forward.

And then, on the other hand, I would like to raise to you a much closer collaboration in the field of science, technology, innovation, and undertaking, because in modern times, free trade has to be not only of goods, but of ideas; not only of services, but of knowledge; not only of investments, but also of technology.

And also, Mr. President, we are committed in the struggle against poverty and excessive inequalities in our country and our continent. And we want to keep on collaborating with the U.S. so as to contribute to other Latin American countries. Just like we can learn from them, they can learn from success stories in our country and in combating the evils of modern society: fight against drug trafficking, terrorism, global warming, and the proliferation of massive destruction weapons and nuclear weapons.

I was talking with President Obama insofar as avoiding this nuclear menace. But it's not only that a few countries in the world will have nuclear weapons and others not, but to have a world without weapons of mass destruction. This is the common goal we share with President Obama and with all the men and women of good will of all of the world.

President Obama, I have read with great attention your words in El Cairo, Egypt, for the Arab world, where you proposed a new beginning in the relations between the United States and the Islam world, and also your words in Accra, Ghana, where you raised a new commitment, a new promise, a new commitment with the sub-Saharan African world. And today, that the winds of freedom, of democracy, of participation, and protection of human rights are stronger than ever, even in those countries that had never—that had not existed for many years. This is a great opportunity to have a new alliance between the United States and the Latin American countries.

That is why I would like to tell you that Latin America is more prepared than ever today so as to leave poverty and underdevelopment behind that have been with us for 200 years of independent life and undertake the adventure of the future of democracy, of freedom, of development, of equality of opportunities. That we may have a continent, as we have dreamt it always—from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego, from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean—that will become a land of freedom, of opportunities, of progress, but also a land of fairness and camaraderie as dreamt by the Founding Fathers of that great Nation like great—like the United States, like the case of Jefferson, a great patriot like Lincoln, but also like San Martin and O'Higgins from our continent.

And the question is a very straightforward one, a very simple one: It's our challenge, it's our mission, the mission of the generation of the bicentennial. Because if it's not now, then when? If we are not the ones, then who?

And President Obama, we are—listen with great attention, with great interest, the message you will deliver in a few hours from the Cultural Center of La Moneda to Latin America and to the whole world.

Thank you very much.

Moderator. We thank the words of the President of the Republic of Chile, Mr. Sebastian Pinera Echenique. Now we will hear the President of the United States, His Excellency, Mr. Barack Obama.

President Obama. Thank you very much, President Pinera. *Buenas tardes* to everyone here.

I want to first of all just extend my greetings to the people of Chile, and I am so grateful for not only the generous words, but also the outstanding hospitality that's being shown to me as well as my family.

I want to begin today by noting that President Pinera and I discussed some urgent events unfolding around the world. Together with our partners, the United States is taking military action to enforce U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973 and protect the Libyan people.

And across the region, we believe that the legitimate aspirations of people must be met and that violence against civilians is not the answer. And across the Pacific, both Chile and the United States are supporting the Japanese people as they recover from the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami and address the situation in their damaged nuclear facility.

These events remind us that in our interconnected world, the security and prosperity of nations and peoples are intertwined as never before. And no region is more closely linked than the United States and Latin America. And here in the Americas, one of our closest and strongest partners is Chile.

Chile is one of the great success stories of this region. It's built a robust democracy. It's been one of the most open and fastest growing economies in the world. The spirit and resilience of the Chilean people, especially after last year's earthquake, have inspired people across the globe. And in my speech this afternoon, I look forward to paying tribute to Chile's progress and the lessons it offers as America forges a new era of partnership across the Americas.

I was proud to welcome President Pinera to Washington last year for our Nuclear Security Summit. Mr. President, I want to commend you on your decisive leadership in these first few months of office and first year of office, a time that's been obviously very difficult and has tested the people of Chile. I want to thank you for the focus and energy that you've brought to the partnership between our two countries, which we have strengthened today.

We're moving ahead with efforts to expand trade and investment, as the President mentioned. Under our existing trade agreement, trade between the United States and Chile has more than doubled, creating new jobs and opportunities in both our countries. But I believe and President Pinera believes that there's always more we can do to expand our economic cooperation.

So today we recommitted ourselves to fully implementing our free trade agreement to include protections of intellectual property so our businesses can innovate and stay competitive. We agreed to build on the progress we're making towards a Trans-Pacific Partnership so we can seize the full potential of trade in the Asia-Pacific, especially for our small and medium businesses.

It's my hope that, along with our other partners, we can reach an agreement on the framework for the TPP by the end of this year, an agreement that can serve as a model for the 21st century.

We're expanding the clean energy partnerships that are key to creating green jobs and addressing climate change, which is evident in the glacier melt in this region. As a member of the Energy and Climate Partnership for the Americas that I proposed, Chile is already sharing its expertise with solar with the region.

I want to commend President Pinera for agreeing to take another step, hosting a new center to address glacier melt in the Andes. In addition, a new U.S.-Chile Energy Business Council will encourage collaborations between our companies in areas like energy efficiency and renewable technologies.

Our governments have agreed to share our experience in dealing with natural disasters, an area, of course, where Chile has enormous expertise and which is critical to recovery and economic reconstruction.

The President and I discussed our shared commitment to expanding educational exchanges among our students, who can learn from each other and bring our countries even closer together. And in my speech today, I'll announce an ambitious new initiative to increase student exchanges between the United States and Latin America, including Chile.

Now, even as we deepen cooperation between our two countries, I want to take this opportunity to commend Chile for the leadership role that it's increasingly playing across the Americas. Chile is a vital contributor to the United Nations mission in Haiti, where we agree that yesterday's election is an opportunity to accelerate recovery and reconstruction efforts, and the Chilean Legislature recently passed strong legislation to combat the scourge of human trafficking.

Under President Pinera's leadership, Chile is taking a new step today. Mr. President, I want to thank you for offering to share Chile's security expertise with Central American nations as they fight back against criminal gangs and narcotraffickers. I'm also pleased that our two governments will be working together to promote development in the Americas.

At the same time, Chile is assuming more of a leadership role beyond the Americas. As part of last year's Nuclear Security Summit, Chile took the bold step of giving up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium. Chile is the first Latin American nation to join a new international effort to strengthen civil society groups that are under threat. And as a member of the U.N.

Human Rights Council, Chile has joined with us in standing up against human rights abuses in Iran and in Libya.

In short, Mr. President, today we've proven again that when the United States and Chile work together in a spirit of mutual interest and mutual respect, it's not only good for the peoples of our nations, I believe it's good for the region, and it's good for the world. And I'm confident that our partnership will only grow stronger in the years to come. And I'm very much grateful for the wonderful hospitality that you're showing me and my delegation.

Thank you very much.

Moderator. We thank the words of the President of the United States. Now we will proceed to the questions from the media. We remind you that only three questions will be allowed, and they have been decided on: one from Chile, one from international, and the first question is Rodrigo Vergara on behalf of the Association of Journalists from—[*inaudible*].

Chile-U.S. Relations/Latin America-U.S. Relations

Q. President Pinera, President Obama, good afternoon. President Obama, you have emphasized and highlighted the economic management of Chile, the leadership in the region—those were your words—and even the successful transitioning to democracy in the difficult years of the nineties. However, in Chile, President Obama, there are some open wounds of the dictatorship of General Pinochet. And so in that sense, leaders, political leaders, leaders of the world, of human rights, even MPs, the son of the murdered Orlando Letelier, Foreign Minister, have said that many of those wounds have to do with the United States. I ask you, Justice is investigating cases of Allende and the death of President Eduardo Frei Montalva. In that new speech that you will announce, is it—do you include that the U.S. is willing to collaborate with those judicial investigations, even that the United States is willing to ask for forgiveness for what it did in those very difficult years in the seventies in Chile?

President Obama. Well, on the specific question of how we can work with the Chilean Government, any requests that are made by Chile to obtain more information about the past is something that we will certainly consider, and we would like to cooperate. I think it's very important for all of us to know our history. And obviously, the history of relations between the United States and Latin America have at times been extremely rocky and have at times been difficult.

I think it's important, though, for us, even as we understand our history and gain clarity about our history, that we're not trapped by our history. And the fact of the matter is, is that over the last two decades, we've seen extraordinary progress here in Chile, and that has not been impeded by the United States, but, in fact, has been fully supported by the United States.

So I can't speak to all of the policies of the past. I can speak certainly to the policies of the present and the future. And as President of the United States, what I know is that our firm commitment to democracy, our firm commitment to eradicating poverty, our full commitment to broad-based and socially inclusive development, our full support of the robust, open markets that have developed here in Chile and the work that President Pinera and his predecessor, President Bachelet, have done in order to transform the economic situation here—those are all things that the United States strongly supports.

And so again, it's important for us to learn from our history, to understand our history, but not be trapped by it, because we've got a lot of challenges now, and even more importantly, we have challenges in the future that we have to attend to.

Moderator. The second question is by Jim Kuhnhenn from the Associated Press.

Situation in Libya

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. *Senor Presidente, muchas gracias.* Sir, how do you square your position that Colonel Qadhafi has lost legitimacy and must go against the limited objective of this campaign, which does not demand his removal? If Colonel Qadhafi is killing his

own people, is it permissible to let him stay in power? And if I may add, do you have any regret, sir, about undertaking this mission while you're on foreign soil? And do you have the support of the Arab people in this yet?

President Obama. Okay. First of all, I think I'm going to embarrass Jim by letting everyone know that Jim's mother is Chilean, and so this is a little bit of a homecoming. You were born in Chile, am I right?

Q. Yes, sir. It's a delight to be here. Thank you.

President Obama. Fantastic. So I thought everybody should know that. And also I think that for all the Chilean press, you don't need to take Jim's example by asking three questions, pretending it's one. [*Laughter*]

Q. One subject.

President Obama. First of all, I think it's very easy to square our military actions and our stated policies. Our military action is in support of a international mandate from the Security Council that specifically focuses on the humanitarian threat posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his people. Not only was he carrying out murders of civilians, but he threatened more. He said very specifically, "We will show no mercy" to people who lived in Benghazi.

And in the face of that, the international community rallied and said we have to stop any potential atrocities inside of Libya and provided a broad mandate to accomplish that specific task. As part of that international coalition, I authorized the United States military to work with our international partners to fulfill that mandate.

Now, I also have stated that it is U.S. policy that Qadhafi needs to go. And we've got a wide range of tools in addition to our military efforts to support that policy. We were very rapid in initiating unilateral sanctions and then helping to mobilize international sanctions against the Qadhafi regime. We froze assets that Qadhafi might have used to further empower himself and purchase weapons or hire mercenaries that might be directed against the Libyan people.

So there are a whole range of policies that we are putting in place that has created one of the most powerful international consensuses around the isolation of Mr. Qadhafi, and we will continue to pursue those. But when it comes to our military action, we are doing so in support of U.N. Security Resolution 1973 that specifically talks about humanitarian efforts. And we are going to make sure that we stick to that mandate.

I think it's also important, since we're on the topic, that I have consistently emphasized that because we're working with international partners, after the initial thrust that has disabled Qadhafi's air defenses, limits his ability to threaten large population centers like Benghazi, that there is going to be a transition taking place in which we have a range of coalition partners—the Europeans, members of the Arab League—who will then be participating in establishing a no-fly zone there.

And so there is going to be a transition taking place in which we are one of the partners among many who are going to ensure that that no-fly zone is enforced and that the humanitarian protection that needs to be provided continues to be in place.

With respect to initiating this action while I was abroad, keep in mind that we were working on very short time frames and we had done all the work and it was just a matter of seeing how Qadhafi would react to the warning that I issued on Friday.

He, despite words to the contrary, was continuing to act aggressively towards his civilians. After a consultation with our allies, we decided to move forward. And it was a matter of me directing Secretary of Defense Gates and Admiral Mullen that the plan that had been developed in great detail extensively prior to my departure was put into place.

Jim, I've forgotten if they were any other elements of that question. But I've tried to be as thorough as possible.

Support From Arab States/Situation in Libya/U.S. Military Role in Libya

Q. Arab support, sir.

President Obama. Well, look, the Arab League specifically called for a no-fly zone before we went to the United Nations. And that

was, I think, an important element in this overall campaign.

Q. But will they be part of the mission?

President Obama. Absolutely. We are in consultations as we speak. As I said, there are different phases to the campaign. The initial campaign, we took a larger role because we've got some unique capabilities. Our ability to take out, for example, Qadhafi's air defense systems are much more significant than some of our other partners. What that does then is it creates the space, it shapes the environment in which a no-fly zone can actually be effective.

It was also important to make sure that we got in there quickly so that whatever advances were being made on Benghazi could be halted and we could send a clear message to Qadhafi that he needed to start pulling his troops back.

Now, keep in mind, we've only been in this process for 2 days now, and so we are continuing to evaluate the situation on the ground. I know the Pentagon and our Defense Department will be briefing you extensively as this proceeds. But the core principle that has to be upheld here is that when the entire international community almost unanimously says that there's a potential humanitarian crisis about to take place, that a leader who has lost his legitimacy decides to turn his military on his own people, that we can't simply stand by with empty words, that we have to take some sort of action.

I think it's also important to note that the way that the U.S. took leadership and managed this process ensures international legitimacy and ensures that our partners, members of the international coalition are bearing the burden of following through on the mission as well. Because, as you know, there—in the past, there have been times where the United States acted unilaterally or did not have full international support, and as a consequence, typically it was the United States military that ended up bearing the entire burden.

Now, last point I'll make on this: I could not be prouder of the manner in which the U.S. military has performed over the last several days. And it's a testament to the men and women in uniform, who, when they're given a mission, they execute and do an outstanding job.

But obviously, our military is already very stretched and carries large burdens all around the world. And whenever possible, for us to be able to get international cooperation—not just in terms of words, but also in terms of planes and pilots and resources—that's something that we should actively seek and embrace, because it relieves the burden on our military and it relieves the burden on U.S. taxpayers to fulfill what is an international mission and not simply a U.S. mission.

Q. Thank you, sir.

Former Regime in Chile/No-Fly Zone in Libya

[*At this point, the reporter began to ask a question in Spanish, which was translated by an interpreter.*]

Q. Mr. President, can I ask you—I will ask you in English.

[*The reporter then spoke in English.*]

Q. I'd like you to answer the—to the response that the President gave regarding the wounds that still linger in this country and the needs that some of the people in this country want for an apology from the United States, perhaps, and certainly for assistance in any investigations that are still ongoing here. Thank you.

President Pinera. The coup d'etat was in—existed in Chile 40 years ago. We had a long and profound conversation with President Obama. We didn't have much time to cover all the issues of the future, so we didn't go so back into the past.

But I can tell you that Chile, our Government and this President believes, firmly believes in the self-determination of peoples and firmly believes in the rule of law and respect for human rights. For that reason, when we had evidence that in the case of President Frei Montalva, there could have been a homicide, our Government submitted a claim, a complaint, is party to it, and it's collaborating to find—to investigate those responsible for the

death of the former President Frei Montalva. And once the judiciary ascertains those responsibilities, they will have to assume the penalties and punishment according to our rule of law.

In the case of President Allende, we don't have the same basis. But if we had them, we would act exactly in the same way and—or the same presumptions.

And I would like to say finally that today, the subject of democracy, of human rights has no borders, does not recognize any border, and that is progress of this 21st-century civilization.

And that is why Chile supports the initiative of the United Nations through its Security Council, NATO, and the Arab League to do all that is possible to end a true carnage, killing of civilians in Libya. And I think that is a responsibility of the international community, because as I said a while ago, human rights do not and should not respect borders. The responsibility is of all of us in each and every place of the world, whatever the circumstances involved to violate human rights. And in my view, a person that has bombarded his own people does not deserve to keep on being the ruler of that people.

Moderator. The last question of this conference will be by Macarena Vidal from Spain.

Situation in Libya/U.S. Military Role in Libya/Chile-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, you asked the Chilean press not to take advantage and make a several-part question, but you didn't mention the international press. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Are you a lawyer or a journalist? [*Laughter*]

Q. Well, we try to be precise. [*Laughter*] So on Libya, when you say that you will be transferring command, when are you thinking of transferring command? And would NATO be the preferred partner to take over that command? And the second part of the question is that you have said that you want an alliance among equals with the peoples of the Americas. What deliverables are you going to go for after this trip to achieve it?

And——

[*The reporter asked a question in Spanish, which was translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Q. ——President Pinera, what is the content of this partnership so as to meet the goals of the region?

President Obama. Well, with respect to Libya, obviously the situation is evolving on the ground. And how quickly this transfer takes place will be determined by the recommendations of our commanding officers that the mission has been completed—the first phase of the mission has been completed.

As I said, our initial focus is taking out Libyan air defenses so that a no-fly zone can operate effectively and aircraft and pilots of the coalition are not threatened when they're maintaining the no-fly zone. The second aspect of this is making sure that the humanitarian aspects of the mission can be met.

But let me emphasize that we anticipate this transition to take place in a matter of days and not a matter of weeks. And so I would expect that over the next several days, we'll have more information, and the Pentagon will be fully briefing the American people as well as the press on that issue.

NATO will be involved in a coordinating function because of the extraordinary capacity of that alliance. But I will leave it to Admiral Mullen and those who are directly involved in the operation to describe to you how exactly that transfer might be—might take place.

With respect to this new partnership, I don't want to give you all my best lines from my speech; otherwise, no one will come. [*Laughter*] But the thing that I'm most excited about is the fact that in a country like Chile, it's not just a matter of what we can give to Chile, it's also a matter of what Chile can offer us.

Chile has done some very interesting work around clean energy, so we set up a clean energy partnership. We think we're doing terrific work on alternative energy sources, but there may be initiatives that are taking place here in Chile that might be transferrable to the United States.

On education, obviously, we have a long history of public education, and our universities, I think, are second to none. But we want to make sure that in this increasingly integrated world, American students aren't just looking inwards, we're also looking outwards. And so the idea of us setting up a broad-based exchange program with the Americas, I think, makes an enormous difference.

Security cooperation: The plague of narcotraffickers in the region is something that we're all too familiar with. And obviously, we have the example of Colombia that has made great strides in bringing security to a country that had been ravaged by drug wars. What lessons can we take and then apply them to smaller countries in Central America, for example, that are going through some of these same struggles?

For Chile, the United States, Colombia, other countries to work in concert to help to train effective security operations in Central America to deal with narcotraffickers is a kind of collaboration that would not be as effective if the United States were operating on its own.

So I think across the spectrum of issues that we care about deeply and that Chile care about deeply, what will characterize this new partnership is the fact that it's a two-way street. This is not just a situation where a highly developed country is helping a poor and impoverished country; this is a situation where an up-and-coming regional power that has a strong voice in international affairs is now collaborating with us to, hopefully, help greater peace and prosperity for the region and the world.

President Pinera. No doubt that insofar as integration of the Americas, we are lagging behind. And the best way to illustrate this is to compare what has happened in America with what happened in Europe.

Last century, the Europeans had two World Wars that—with a toll of more than 70 million casualties. But at some point, they had the wisdom, the courage to abandon the rationale of Line Maginot or Siegfried Line and to embrace Maastricht Treaty. With the leadership and the vision of such renowned statesmen like Adenauer, De Gasperi, Haussmann, Schuman, they began to build what today we know of as European Union.

And in America, we are much behind that. In America, 20 years ago, President Bush, father, raised the idea of a free trade area from Alaska to "Fire Land" [Tierra del Fuego],* generating a lot of enthusiasm in the region, but it never came true, never materialized.

And so the time is right now because Latin America has been for too long the continent of hope or of the future, but a continent cannot be a promise forever. And so we are of age now, and we need to fulfill our mission. Therefore, the main task of Latin America is to recover the lost time and tap all of its potential.

We have lots of things in common with the U.S.: vast, generous territory, homogenous peoples, hard-working people. We don't have racial problems that affect some African countries or the wars that raged in Europe, nor the religious conflicts of Europe itself. And therefore Latin America is called to compromise, or rather commitment with its own fate.

And therefore, we are looking forward to President Obama's words. We are all left-handed—we have many coincidences—we studied in Harvard, both of us. We are sportsmen. President Obama continues to be a basketball player; I was in my time as well. I think the First Lady of the U.S. is very good-looking, and President Obama has said the same about the First Lady of Chile. There are plenty of coincidences, but the most important one is the one we'll find this afternoon.

And modestly, if I could suggest to President Obama, we hope to have a partnership that is 2.0, a one where we have all responsibilities and not an existential alliance, because existentialism has never been enough to face the major problems, but rather, a partnership of collaboration between Latin America and the United States sharing values, principles, and a common vision.

And that alliance should be comprehensive. It should reach out to the fields of democracy,

* The translator provided a literal translation of "Tierra del Fuego."

freedom, rule of law, defense of human rights. And I think that we have to improve the democratic charter of OAS. It should also open up the doors to the free trade of goods and services, and faster than what we have done hitherto. And in addition to that, to include those subjects which are the true pillars of the 21st century: quality of education, science, technology, innovation, entrepreneurship. Therein lie the pillars for Latin America so as to leave poverty and antidevelopment behind.

And we have so much to learn from a country like the United States that, in its 230 years of independent life, has really gave—has given true evidence of being an innovative country and that has made the largest contribution to progress of mankind.

And thus, Latin America and the United States have a lot to gain from this alliance, but also has to reach out to two of the most important challenges of the 21st century: energy, to have clean, safe renewable energies; and water—if global warming keeps on going, could be the most scarce resource of our century. And also face the major problems of modern society that cannot be faced unilaterally: organized crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, global warming, the subject of world security. It can no longer be faced individually. We need to work jointly together.

And in our view, that will call for a new international order that will replace that which emerged in Bretton Woods after the Second World War and to be appropriate and adaptive to the needs and challenges of the 21st century, where the only constant thing we have is change.

So the time is right to recover all that lost time. And the time is here so that finally, this relationship of encounters, disencounters—of shaking hands or our backs—for that to be in the past. And let us initiate a new era of collaboration, reencountering frankly, effectively, concretely, that will truly face and solve the major problems; that will also open up the doors to tap the main opportunities. This society of knowledge and information is knocking on our doors.

Latin America was late to the Industrial Revolution. We cannot be late in this tremendous revolution, which is so much deeper, which is that of knowledge and information. And it has been very generous with the countries that want to embrace it, but very cool with those countries that do not tap it.

No child should be left behind; I've heard this from President Obama. And here, we say in Latin America, no country should be left behind.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 3:18 p.m. at the Palacio de La Moneda. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Michelle Bachelet Jeria of Chile; and Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson. President Pinera referred to his wife Cecilia Morel de Pinera; and former President George H.W. Bush. A reporter referred to Sen. Juan Pablo Letelier Morel of Chile, son of Marco Orlando Letelier del Solar, a former Chilean Government official who was assassinated on September 21, 1976, in Washington, DC. President Pinera and two reporters spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks in Santiago
March 21, 2011

Muchas gracias. Thank you so much. Thank you. Please, please, everyone be seated.

Thank you. *Buenas tardes*. It is a wonderful honor to be here in Santiago, Chile. And I want to first of all thank your President, President Pinera, for his outstanding leadership and the hospitality that he's extended not only to me, but also to my wife, my daughters, and most importantly, my mother-in-law. [*Laughter*]

To the people of Santiago, to the people of Chile, thank you so much for your wonderful

welcome. And on behalf of the people of the United States, let me thank you for your friendship and the strong bonds between our people.

There are several people that I just want to acknowledge very briefly. We have the President of the Inter-American Development Bank, Luis Alberto Moreno, who is here. We also have Alicia Barcena, who is the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Throughout our history, this land has been called *el fin de la tierra*—the end of the world. But I've come here today because in the 21st century, this nation is a vital part of our interconnected world. In an age when peoples are intertwined like never before, Chile shows that we need not be divided by race or religion or ethnic conflict. You've welcomed immigrants from every corner of the globe, even as you celebrate a proud indigenous heritage.

At a time when people around the world are reaching for their freedoms, Chile shows that, yes, it is possible to transition from dictatorship to democracy and to do so peacefully. Indeed, our marvelous surroundings today, just steps from where Chile lost its democracy decades ago, is a testament to Chile's progress and its undying democratic spirit.

Despite barriers of distance and geography, you've integrated Chile into the global economy, trading with countries all over the world and, in this Internet age, becoming the most digitally connected country in Latin America.

And in a world of sometimes wrenching pain—as we're seeing today in Japan—it is the character of this country that inspires. "Our original guiding stars," said Pablo Neruda, "are struggle and hope." But, he added, "there is no such thing as a lone struggle, no such thing as a lone hope." The Chilean people have shown this time and again, including your recovery from the terrible earthquake here 1 year ago.

Credit for Chile's success belongs to the Chilean people, whose courage, sacrifices, and perseverance built this nation into the leader that it is. And we are very honored to be joined today by four leaders who have guided this nation through years of great progress: Presidents Aylwin, Frei, Lagos, and of course your current President Pinera. Thank you all to the former Presidents for being here, as well as President Pinera.

So I could not imagine a more fitting place to discuss the new era of partnership that the United States is pursuing not only with Chile, but across the Americas. And I'm grateful that we're joined by leaders and members of the diplomatic corps from across the region.

Within my first 100 days in office, one of my first foreign trips as President, I traveled to Trinidad and Tobago to meet with leaders from across the hemisphere at the Summit of the Americas. And there, I pledged to seek partnerships of equality and shared responsibility, based on mutual interest and mutual respect, but also on shared values.

Now, I know I'm not the first President from the United States to pledge a new spirit of partnership with our Latin American neighbors. Words are easy, and I know that there have been times where perhaps the United States took this region for granted.

Even now, I know our headlines are often dominated by events in other parts of the world. But let's never forget: Every day, the future is being forged by the countries and peoples of Latin America. For Latin America is not the old stereotype of a region of—in perpetual conflict or trapped in endless cycles of poverty. The world must now recognize Latin America for the dynamic and growing region that it truly is.

Latin America is at peace. Civil wars have ended. Insurgencies have been pushed back. Old border disputes have been resolved. In Colombia, great sacrifices by citizens and security forces have restored a level of security not seen in decades.

And just as old conflicts have receded, so too have the ideological battles that often fueled them: the old, stale debates between state-run economies and unbridled capitalism, between the abuses of right-wing paramilitaries and left-wing insurgents, between those who believe that the United States causes all the region's problems and those who believe that the United States ignores all the problems. Those

are false choices, and they don't reflect today's realities.

Today, Latin America is democratic. Virtually all the people of Latin America have gone from living under dictatorships to living in democracies. Across the region, we see vibrant democracies, from Mexico to Chile to Costa Rica. We've seen historic peaceful transfers of power, from El Salvador to Uruguay to Paraguay. The work of perfecting our democracies, of course, is never truly done, but this is the outstanding progress that's been made here in the Americas.

Today, Latin America is growing. Having made tough but necessary reforms, nations like Peru and Brazil are seeing impressive growth. As a result, Latin America weathered the global economic downturn better than other regions. Across the region, tens of millions of people have been lifted from extreme poverty. From Guadalajara to Santiago to Sao Paulo, a new middle class is demanding more of themselves and more of their governments.

Latin America is coming together to address shared challenges. Chile, Colombia, and Mexico are sharing their expertise in security with nations in Central America. When a coup in Honduras threatened democratic progress, the nations of the hemisphere unanimously invoked the Inter-American Democratic Charter, helping to lay the foundation for the return to the rule of law. The contributions of Latin American countries have been critical in Haiti, as has Latin American diplomacy in the lead up to yesterday's election in Haiti.

And increasingly, Latin America is contributing to global prosperity and security. As longtime contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions, Latin American nations have helped to prevent conflicts from Africa to Asia. At the G–20, nations like Mexico, Brazil, Argentina now have a greater voice in global economic decisionmaking. Under Mexican leadership, the world made progress at Cancun in our efforts to combat climate change. Nations like Chile have played a leading role in strengthening civil society groups around the world.

So this is the Latin America that I see today: a region on the move, proud of its progress, and ready to assume a greater role in world affairs. And for all these reasons, I believe that Latin America is more important to the prosperity and security of the United States than ever before. With no other region does the United States have so many connections. And nowhere do we see that more than in the tens of millions of Hispanic Americans across the United States, who enrich our society, grow our economy, and strengthen our Nation every single day.

And I believe Latin America is only going to become more important to the United States, especially to our economy. Trade between the United States and Latin America has surged. We buy more of your products, more of your goods than any other country, and we invest more in this region than any other country.

For instance, we export more than three times as much to Latin America as we do to China. Our exports to this region, which are growing faster than our exports to the rest of the world, will soon support more than 2 million U.S. jobs. In other words, when Latin America is more prosperous, the United States is more prosperous.

But even more than interests, we're bound by shared values. In each other's journey, we see reflections of our own: colonists who broke free from empires, pioneers who opened new frontiers, citizens who have struggled to expand our nations' promise to all people—men and women, White, Black, and Brown. We're people of faith who must remember that all of us, especially the most fortunate among us, must do our part, especially for the least among us. We're citizens who know that ensuring that democracies deliver for our people must be the work of all.

This is our common history. This is our common heritage. We are all Americans. *Todos somos Americanos*.

Across the Americas, parents want their children to be able to run and play and know that they'll come home safely. Young people all desperately want an education. Fathers want the dignity that comes from work, and women want

the same opportunities as their husbands. Entrepreneurs want the chance to start that new business. And people everywhere want to be treated with the respect to which every human being is entitled. These are the hopes—simple yet profound—that beat in the hearts of millions across the Americas.

But if we're honest, we'll also admit that that these dreams are still beyond the reach of too many, that progress in the Americas has not come fast enough. Not for the millions who endure the injustice of extreme poverty. Not for the children in shantytowns and the *favelas,* who just want the same chance as everybody else. Not for the communities that are caught in the brutal grips of cartels and gangs, where the police are outgunned and too many people live in fear.

And despite this region's democratic progress, stark inequalities endure: in political and economic power that is too often concentrated in the hands of the few, instead of serving the many; in the corruption that too often still stifles economic growth and development, innovation and entrepreneurship; and in some leaders who cling to bankrupt ideologies to justify their own power and who seek to silence their opponents because those opponents have the audacity to demand their universal rights. These too are realities that we must face.

Of course, we are not the first generation to face these challenges. Fifty years ago this month, President John F. Kennedy proposed an ambitious Alliance for Progress. It was, even by today's standards, a massive investment, billions of U.S. dollars to meet the basic needs of people across the region. Such a program was right; it was appropriate for that era. But the realities of our time—and the new capabilities and confidence of Latin America—demand something different.

President Kennedy's challenge endures: "to build a hemisphere where all people can hope for a sustainable, suitable standard of living, and all can live out their lives in dignity and in freedom." But half a century later, we must give meaning to this work in our own way, in a new way.

I believe that in the Americas today, there are no senior partners, and there are no junior partners, there are only equal partners. Of course, equal partnership, in turn, demands a sense of shared responsibility. We have obligations to each other. And today, the United States is working with the nations of this hemisphere to meet our responsibilities in several key areas.

First, we're partnering to address the concerns that people across the Americas say they worry about the most, and that's the security of their families and communities. Criminal gangs and narcotraffickers are not only a threat to the security of our citizens, they're a threat to development, because they scare away investments that economies need to prosper. And they are a direct threat to democracy, because they fuel the corruption that rots institutions from within.

So with our partners from Colombia to Mexico and new regional initiatives in Central America and the Caribbean, we're confronting this challenge together, from every direction. We've increased our support: the equipment, training, and technologies that security forces, border security, and police need to keep communities safe. We're improving coordination and sharing more information so that those who traffic in drugs and in human beings have fewer places to hide. And we're putting unprecedented pressure on cartel finances, including in the United States.

But we'll never break the grip of the cartels and the gangs unless we also address the social and economic forces that fuel criminality. We need to reach at-risk youth before they turn to drugs and crime. So we're joining with partners across the Americas to expand community-based policing, strengthen juvenile justice systems, and invest in crime and drug prevention programs.

As the nations of Central America develop a new regional security strategy, the United States stands ready to do our part through a new partnership that puts the focus where it should be: on the security of citizens. And with regional and international partners, we'll make

sure our support is not just well intentioned, but is well coordinated and well spent.

I've said before, and I will repeat: As President, I've made it clear that the United States shares and accepts our share of responsibility for drug violence. After all, the demand for drugs, including in the United States, drives this crisis. And that's why we've developed a new drug control strategy that focused on reducing the demand for drugs through education and prevention and treatment. And I would point out that even during difficult fiscal times in the United States, we've proposed increasing our commitment to these efforts by some $10 billion this year alone.

We're also doing more to stem the southbound flow of guns into the region. We're screening all southbound rail cargo, we're seizing many more guns bound for Mexico, and we're putting more gunrunners behind bars. And every gun or gunrunner that we take off the streets is one less threat to the families and communities of the Americas.

As we work to ensure the security of our citizens, we're partnering in a second area, and that's promoting prosperity and opportunity. I've been so impressed with President Pinera's pledge to lift everyone out of extreme poverty by 2020. That's an ambitious goal and an appropriate goal. And with this trip, I'm working to expand some of the trade and investment that might help achieve this goal.

Across the region, we're moving ahead with Open Skies agreements to bring our people and businesses closer together. We're moving forward with our Trans-Pacific Partnership, which includes Chile and Peru, to create new trade opportunities in the fast-growing markets of the Asia-Pacific. And as I've directed, my administration has intensified our efforts to move forward on trade agreements with Panama and Colombia, consistent with our values and with our interests.

We're also encouraging the next generation of businesses and entrepreneurs. So we'll work with the Inter-American Development Bank to increase lending. We've expanded credit under a new Microfinance Growth Fund for the Americas. We're supporting reforms to tax systems, which are critical for economic growth and public investment. We're creating new Pathways to Prosperity—microcredit, entrepreneurship training—for those who must share in economic growth, including women and members of Afro-Caribbean and indigenous communities.

And we're coming together as a hemisphere to create clean energy jobs and pursue more secure and sustainable energy futures. And if anybody doubts the urgency of climate change, they look—they should look no further than the Americas, from the stronger storms in the Caribbean to glacier melt in the Andes to the loss of forests and farmland across the region.

Under the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas that I proposed, countries have stepped forward, each providing leadership and expertise. Brazil has expertise in biofuels, Chile in geothermal, Mexico on energy efficiency. El Salvador is connecting grids in Central America to make electricity more reliable. These are exactly the kind of partnerships that we need, neighbors joining with neighbors to unleash the progress that none of us can achieve alone.

It's the same philosophy behind two additional initiatives that I'm announcing today, which will help our countries educate and innovate for the future. First, we're launching a new initiative to harness the power of social media and online networks to help students, scientists, academics, and entrepreneurs collaborate and develop the new ideas and products that will keep America—the Americas competitive in a global economy.

And I'm proud to announce that the United States will work with partners in this region, including the private sector, to increase the number of U.S. students studying in Latin America to 100,000 and the number of Latin American students studying in the United States to 100,000.

Staying competitive also, of course, demands that we address immigration, an issue that evokes great passions in the United States as well as in the Americas. As President, I've made it clear that immigration strengthens the United States. We are a nation of immigrants,

which is why I have consistently spoken out against anti-immigrant sentiment. We're also a nation of laws, which is why I will not waver in my determination to fix our broken immigration system. I'm committed to comprehensive reform that secures our borders, enforces our laws, and addresses the millions of undocumented workers who are living in the shadows of the United States.

I believe, though, that this challenge will be with us for a very long time so long as people believe that the only way to provide for their families is to leave their families and head north.

And that's why the United States has to continue to partner with countries that pursue the broad-based economic growth that gives people and nations a path out of poverty. And that's what we're seeing here in Chile. As part of our new approach to development, we're working with partners like Guatemala and El Salvador, who are committed to building their own capacity, from helping farmers improve crop yields to helping health care systems to deliver better care.

Which leads me to the final area where we must continue to partner, and that's strengthening democracy and human rights. More than 60 years ago, our nations came together in an Organization of American States and declared, and I quote, that "representative democracy is an indispensable condition for the stability, peace, and development of the region." A decade ago, we reaffirmed this principle, with an Inter-American Democratic Charter that stated, and I quote, "The people of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it."

Across the Americas, generations, including generations of Chileans, have struggled and sacrificed to give meaning to these words: ordinary men and women who dared to speak their mind; activists who organized new movements; faith leaders who preached social justice; the mothers of the disappeared who demanded the truth; political prisoners who rose to become Presidents; and even now, *las Damas de Blanco*, who march in quiet dignity.

The people of the Americas have shown that there is no substitute for democracy. As governments, we have, then, an obligation to defend what has been won. So as we mark the 10th anniversary of the Inter-American Democratic Charter this year, let's reaffirm the principles that we know to be true.

Let's recommit to defending democracy and human rights in our own countries by strengthening the institutions that democracy needs to flourish: free and fair elections in which people choose their own leaders, vibrant legislatures that provide oversight, independent judiciaries that uphold the rule of law, a free press that promotes open debate, professional militaries under civilian control, strong civil societies that hold governments accountable, and governments that are transparent and responsive to their citizens. This is what makes a democracy.

And just as we defend democracy and human rights within our borders, let's recommit to defending them across our hemisphere. I understand every nation will follow its own path. No nation should impose its will on another. But surely we can agree that democracy is about more than majority rule, that simply holding power does not give a leader the right to suppress the rights of others, and that leaders must maintain power through consent and not coercion. We have to speak out when we see those principles violated.

Let's never waver in our support for the rights of people to determine their own future, and yes, that includes the people of Cuba. Since taking office, I've announced the most significant changes to my Nation's policy towards Cuba in decades. I've made it possible for Cuban Americans to visit and support their families in Cuba. We're allowing Americans to send remittances that bring some economic hope for people across Cuba, as well as more independence from Cuban authorities.

Going forward, we'll continue to seek ways to increase the independence of the Cuban people, who I believe are entitled to the same freedom and liberty as everyone else in this hemisphere. I will make this effort to try to

break out of this history that's now lasted for longer than I've been alive.

But Cuban authorities must take some meaningful actions to respect the basic rights of their own people, not because the United States insists upon it, but because the people of Cuba deserve it, no less than the people of the United States or Chile or Brazil or any other country deserve it.

The lessons of Latin America, I believe, can be a guide, a guide for people around the world who are beginning their own journeys toward democracy. There is no one model for democratic transitions. But as this region knows, successful transitions do have certain ingredients: the moral force of nonviolence; dialogue that's open and inclusive; the protection of basic rights, such as peaceful expression and assembly; accountability for past wrongs; and matching political reform with economic reform, because democracy must meet the basic needs and aspirations of people.

With decades of experience, there's so much Latin America can now share: how to build political parties and organize free elections, how to ensure peaceful transfers of power, how to navigate the winding paths of reform and reconciliation. And when the inevitable setbacks occur, you can remind people to never lose sight of those guiding stars of which Pablo Neruda spoke: struggle, but also hope.

Security for our citizens, trade and development that creates jobs, prosperity and a clean energy future, standing up for democracy and human rights—these are the partnerships that we can forge together, here in the Americas, but also around the world. And if anyone doubts whether this region has the capacity to meet these challenges, they need to only remember what happened here in Chile only a few months ago.

Their resolve and faith inspired the world, "*Los Treinta y Tres*." I don't need to tell you the story; you know it well. But it's worth remembering how this entire nation came together. Across government, civilian and military, national and local, across the private sector, with large companies and small shopkeepers donating supplies, and across every segment of Chilean society, people came together to sustain those men down below and their families up at Camp Esperanza. It was a miraculous rescue. It was a tribute to Chilean leadership. And when, finally, Luis Urzua emerged, he spoke for an entire nation when he said, "I am proud to be Chilean."

Yet something else happened in those 2 months. The people and governments of Latin America came together to stand with a neighbor in need. And with a Latin American country in the lead, the world was proud to play a supporting role, sending workers from the United States and Canada, rescue equipment from Europe, communications gear from Asia. And as the miners were lifted to safety for those joyous reunions, it was a truly global movement, watched and celebrated by more than a billion people.

If ever we needed a reminder of the humanity and the hopes that we share, that moment in the desert was such. When a country like Chile puts its mind to it, there's nothing you can't do. When countries across Latin America come together and focus on a common goal, when the United States and others in the world do our part, there's nothing we can't accomplish together.

And that is our vision of the Americas. This is the progress we can achieve together. This is the spirit of partnership and equality to which the United States is committed. I am confident that, working together, there is nothing we cannot achieve. Thank you very much. *Muchas gracias*. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:27 p.m. at the Palacio de La Moneda Cultural Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile; former Presidents Patricio Aylwin Azocar, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, and Ricardo Lagos Escobar of Chile; and Luis Alberto Urzua, a miner rescued from the San Jose mine in Copiapo, Chile, on October 13, 2010. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Commencement of Military Operations Against Libya
March 21, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

At approximately 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, on March 19, 2011, at my direction, U.S. military forces commenced operations to assist an international effort authorized by the United Nations (U.N.) Security Council and undertaken with the support of European allies and Arab partners, to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe and address the threat posed to international peace and security by the crisis in Libya. As part of the multilateral response authorized under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973, U.S. military forces, under the command of Commander, U.S. Africa Command, began a series of strikes against air defense systems and military airfields for the purposes of preparing a no-fly zone. These strikes will be limited in their nature, duration, and scope. Their purpose is to support an international coalition as it takes all necessary measures to enforce the terms of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973. These limited U.S. actions will set the stage for further action by other coalition partners.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 authorized Member States, under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in Libya, including the establishment and enforcement of a "no-fly zone" in the airspace of Libya. United States military efforts are discrete and focused on employing unique U.S. military capabilities to set the conditions for our European allies and Arab partners to carry out the measures authorized by the U.N. Security Council Resolution.

Muammar Qadhafi was provided a very clear message that a cease-fire must be implemented immediately. The international community made clear that all attacks against civilians had to stop; Qadhafi had to stop his forces from advancing on Benghazi; pull them back from Ajdabiya, Misrata, and Zawiya; and establish water, electricity, and gas supplies to all areas. Finally, humanitarian assistance had to be allowed to reach the people of Libya.

Although Qadhafi's Foreign Minister announced an immediate cease-fire, Qadhafi and his forces made no attempt to implement such a cease-fire, and instead continued attacks on Misrata and advanced on Benghazi. Qadhafi's continued attacks and threats against civilians and civilian populated areas are of grave concern to neighboring Arab nations and, as expressly stated in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973, constitute a threat to the region and to international peace and security. His illegitimate use of force not only is causing the deaths of substantial numbers of civilians among his own people, but also is forcing many others to flee to neighboring countries, thereby destabilizing the peace and security of the region. Left unaddressed, the growing instability in Libya could ignite wider instability in the Middle East, with dangerous consequences to the national security interests of the United States. Qadhafi's defiance of the Arab League, as well as the broader international community moreover, represents a lawless challenge to the authority of the Security Council and its efforts to preserve stability in the region. Qadhafi has forfeited his responsibility to protect his own citizens and created a serious need for immediate humanitarian assistance and protection, with any delay only putting more civilians at risk.

The United States has not deployed ground forces into Libya. United States forces are conducting a limited and well-defined mission in support of international efforts to protect civilians and prevent a humanitarian disaster. Accordingly, U.S. forces have targeted the Qadhafi regime's air defense systems, command and control structures, and other capabilities of Qadhafi's armed forces used to attack civilians and civilian populated areas. We will seek a rapid, but responsible, transition of operations to coalition, regional, or international organizations that are postured to continue activities as may

be necessary to realize the objectives of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973.

For these purposes, I have directed these actions, which are in the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States, pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Daniel K. Inouye, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile in Santiago
March 21, 2011

Buenas noches. President Pinera; First Lady; former Presidents Aylwin, Frei, Lagos; to all the distinguished guests here tonight, especially the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Jose Miguel Insulza: It is wonderful to be here. I have to say that because I've already given one speech tonight, I've already made remarks at the press, I'm going to keep my remarks tonight very brief. Because otherwise, you won't invite me back. [*Laughter*]

On our flight into Chile today, we were all struck by the incredible beauty of the Andes. We looked out the window, Michelle and my daughters and my staff, and we marveled at the awesome ranges and the snowcapped peaks. It was truly spectacular.

And it called to mind something once said by a beloved daughter of both our countries, the novelist Isabel Allende. She said, "I come from a land of mountains, where friendship is a blood pact . . . hospitality is sacred, [and] bonds unbreakable."

President Pinera, First Lady, to you and the people of Santiago and of Chile, thank you for the extraordinary hospitality that you have shown to both me, Michelle, and our daughters. And thank you for the friendship and the strong bonds between our people, which indeed are unbreakable.

Given the events that are unfolding half a world away, in the Middle East and North Africa, I hope you'll give me a brief moment to reflect on the broader meaning of the times that we live in.

We gather in a palace that tells the story of a nation and its relationship with my own. For many years, this was a symbol of how Chile lost its democracy. But today, it stands as a testament to how Chile regained and rebuilt your democracy, an achievement for which I know all Chileans are extraordinarily proud.

In this sense, you've fulfilled the vision of the liberator Bolivar, who long ago predicted, "Chile can be free." Chile can be free. And as I said in my speech today, at a time when others around the world are reaching for their own rights and struggling for their own sense of dignity, Chile sends a powerful message: You too can write a new chapter in the story of your nation; you too can be free.

Some have called Chile's progress a miracle. But as you know so well, there was nothing miraculous about it. It takes courage and sacrifice and resolve over many years. This too is Chile's lesson for the world. Democracy can't be imposed from the outside. It must spring from within, from the hearts and souls of those who seek it and are willing to work for it.

There's a saying that goes, "Tell me who is by your side, and I'll tell you who you are." And so I would like to propose a toast. I hope they didn't mix up our glasses. [*Laughter*].

To the people and progress of Chile, the United States of America is proud to stand with you as partners. And to what our partnership

says about who we are, two proud nations bound by the conviction that change is possible, that every nation can be free, and that there can be no denying the dignity and human rights that are so eloquently expressed in our Constitution and are now lived out in Chile today.

Salud.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:06 p.m. at the Palacio de La Moneda. In his remarks, he referred to Cecilia Morel de Pinera, wife of President Pinera; and former Presidents Patricio Aylwin Azocar, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, and Ricardo Lagos Escobar of Chile.

The President's News Conference With President Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena of El Salvador in San Salvador, El Salvador
March 22, 2011

President Funes. Good afternoon, and thank you so much for your presence. Thanks to all the friends of the press, both domestic and international.

First of all, I would like to thank President Obama for his visit, and also to his family and his committee—his delegation that accompanied this morning. And on behalf of my wife Vanda and all the people of El Salvador, I really thank you, Mr. President, for the support that you have given to the people of El Salvador and to the process of transition and building of democracy that we're going through. It is a great honor to have your presence in El Salvador. So welcome once again, Mr. President, and I hope that you enjoy, the few hours that you're going to be here, the hospitality of our people.

President Obama has asked me if this is the weather characteristic of this time of the year, and I was saying that, yes, and that it is a pity because if he had stayed a little bit longer we could have invited you to get to see the beaches of our country that are one of the best in the region.

Dear friends of the press, this visit of President Obama is historical. This encounter is produced when our country is immersed in a process of deep changes that started with the political—[*inaudible*]—a transition that took place in a very orderly and peaceful manner that has meant a transcendental step forward for the consolidation of our democracy and of our institutions in the fight for transparency.

Therefore, we are in face of a great opportunity for our political, economic, and social development, an opportunity that is historic in nature, to get—to do away with the obstacles that in the past did not allow us to advance as a unit towards a new model of development with social justice.

Your visit, Mr. President, is circumscribed within this process as showmanship of your recognition of the advancements in our democracy and the efforts that we have carried out as a people to reach international consensus that will allow us to continue progressing together facing the great challenges, especially poverty and the commitment to get greater levels of citizen security.

We coincided when we were talking with President Obama that this visit to the Latin America region is fundamental, and he was telling me some details of his meeting with President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil and the President of Chile.

The truth, Mr. President, is that this is a fundamental visit, first of all because Latin America, after the democratization process that we've gone through the last two decades, is now a region in peace that enjoys the deserved fruits of this great struggle for human rights and the strengthening of our democracies.

But also it is fundamental from point of view—the economic point of view because the majority of the Latin America countries are just overcoming this international crisis better than other countries in the world based on models against poverty and betting on their productive sectors and the hard-working people that they have.

We celebrate these circumstances that situate Latin America as a fundamental point within the international reference after this international crisis. And I think that the criteria with which you have based your visit to Latin America is a support to the path that my country has taken, to take Brazil and the United States as my points of reference.

First, because Chile represents for us an example of democratic transition that was very successful of overcoming dictatorships and polarization. It is a country that has been able to cure its injuries to reach this institutional soundness that we admire so much.

And Brazil has also shown in the 8 years of the Presidency of my friend Lula, and now with the starting of the Presidency of Dilma, Brazil has demonstrated that the struggle against poverty is the greatest engine for growth, and that this model that strives to improve production is also our inspiration.

So we celebrate being part of this visit, of this tour, and to be able to go more in depth in this friendship that we started on March 8 last year when I visited you in Washington.

And allow me briefly before I give the floor to President Obama to synthesize from my perspective some of the topics that we developed in this bilateral agenda.

First of all, as I said in private, now I say it in public in front of the friends of the press, I want to thank publicly the President of the United States for including our country in such important initiatives like the BRIDGE project and the Partnership for Growth.

Both are very important processes for us. And in this sense, we have requested the President to dynamize this process so that these projects can become a reality as soon as possible. We already have a schedule that foresees the definition of great projects in June, with which we will start this partnership.

I also want to thank the words of President Obama when he recognizes the importance of our population in the development of his country: the presence of more than 2 million of Salvadorans that work and live in the United States and the importance that this population has in the development of El Salvador through the remittances that they send year by year.

Of course, migration was another key issue in our conversation. We coincided once again with President Obama on the need to have focus for development and joint responsibility in this sense. We also coincided that with regards to migration, the best strategy is the struggle against poverty and the creation of opportunities to have our people stay in their places of origin.

Migration is a painful expression of a world that has not been able to establish accessible parameters of justice and inclusion. I have expressed to President Obama my pleasure when I heard in his speech at the Union State the commitment of pushing an agreement of both parties, bipartisan agreement for comprehensive immigration reform and present it to the Congress of the United States.

And finally, we also talked about security, and we did so in an extended meeting with the presence of officials of the Cabinet of President Obama, as well as ours. This has been a key issue in this meeting, and I have expressed to President Obama the willingness of my Government to continue with the efforts of Central American security.

We said that narco-activity, such as an insecurity, is not an issue that is only a problem for El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua isolatedly, not even Colombia or Mexico alone. It's a problem that attacks us as a region. And this is why we are building a regional strategy through the CARSI Initiative.

Of course, I also insisted that this is an issue that should not only be approached through the persecution of the crime by our armies and police, but that we have to stress on prevention policies. And therefore, the best weapon to combat and reduce crime in the region is through the investment in social policies.

And finally, I thanked President Obama, as I do it right now in public, for his decision to visit the tomb of Monsignor Arnulfo Romero and the kindness of his invitation to accompany him in this historical visit. As I have said, Monsignor is the spiritual guide of this nation, and the visit that you are going to carry out to the tomb of

Monsignor implies for us a recognition of a leader, an international leader like President Obama, to the message of Oscar Arnulfo Romero and the universal validity of his message.

Thank you once again for your stay in our country, and we thank you for the expression of kindness by your wife and your children in this visit to El Salvador. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Obama. President Funes, thank you so much for your very generous words. It was a pleasure to welcome you and First Lady Pignato to the White House last year. I want to thank you today for welcoming me and my wife and our daughters to El Salvador. We are honored to be here.

Yesterday in Santiago, Chile, I outlined how the United States is forging partnerships for progress with nations and peoples across Latin America. And there are few better examples of both the opportunities and challenges facing the Americas today than here in El Salvador.

Fortunately for El Salvador, it enjoys the wise leadership of President Funes. And, Mr. President, I want to commend you for your courageous work to overcome old divisions in Salvadoran society and to show that progress comes through pragmatism and building consensus. You've articulated a vision of economic growth and social progress that is inclusive of all segments of Salvadoran society. And I want to make it clear today that the United States wants to be a partner with El Salvador in this process. We want El Salvador to be successful.

Thanks to smart investments in education, rural development, and infrastructure, El Salvador has made gains in reducing poverty. And to build on this progress, El Salvador is one of the first four countries in the world in our Partnership for Growth, which is a key element of my administration's new approach to development.

Instead of the old donor-recipient model, we're working as partners, with El Salvador in the lead, to confront the hurdles to growth and development. As El Salvador's largest trading partner, we'll help identify reforms that can mobilize private investment, increase trade, and create opportunities for the Salvadoran people. And one of the most important steps is to foster collaborations between government and the private sector, because both have so much to gain when people are lifted out of poverty and contribute to their country's prosperity.

At the same time, we need to increase trade and economic growth across Central America. I very much appreciated the President's insights on the region. Today I'm pleased to announce a new effort, our Crossroads Partnership. We'll work with countries in the region to make borders more efficient and more secure so we're encouraging trade and economic growth rather than constraining it.

As President Funes mentioned, we discussed immigration. President Funes is committed to creating more economic opportunities here in El Salvador so that people don't feel like they have to head north to provide for their families. As I told the President, I remain firmly committed to comprehensive immigration reform in the United States.

I know this is especially important to the some 2 million Salvadoran people who are living and working in the United States. They're making extraordinary contributions to our country, even as they support their families and communities here in El Salvador. So I updated the President on the new consumer protections that I signed into law, which give people more information and make sure their remittances actually reach their loved ones back home.

Today we're also launching a new effort to confront the narcotraffickers and gangs that have caused so much violence in all of our countries and especially here in Central America. Our two nations already cooperate very closely in the fight against these criminals. As I said in my speech yesterday, the United States will do our part as the nations of Central America develop a new joint security strategy this spring.

Under the Central American Citizen Security Partnership that I'm announcing today, we'll focus $200 million to support efforts here in the region, including addressing, as President Funes indicated, the social and economic forces that drive young people towards criminality.

We'll help strengthen courts, civil society groups and institutions that uphold the rule of law. And we'll work closely with regional partners like Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Canada, and international partners like Spain, the European Union, and the Inter-American Development Bank. This has to be a coordinated effort that draws on the unique expertise of different countries and institutions.

Finally, we're deepening our efforts to pursue sustainable energy and to address climate change, which is already a harsh reality for Salvadorans and people across the region who face more frequent and more severe storms. El Salvador is already a leader in geothermal energy. Under the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas, El Salvador is working to connect grids in this region to make electricity more reliable. I want to commend President Funes for taking another step today, agreeing to host a regional center where the nations of this region can come together to find new ways to reduce emissions and prevent deforestation.

So again, Mr. President, I want to thank you for welcoming me here today and for your commitment to closer ties between our nations. I think the partnership that we're forging together are exactly what's needed in the Americas today: neighbors joining with neighbors to realize progress that none of us can achieve alone. Every nation, I believe, no matter how large or how small, can contribute to that progress. And I believe that under the leadership of President Funes, El Salvador can be a source of great prosperity and security for this region for many years to come.

So thank you very much.

Moderator. And now we will start with the questions and answers. We have two questions by the press of El Salvador and two questions by the press of the United States. El Salvador, Oscar Diaz, a journalist of *La Presna Grafica*.

Central American Citizen Security Partnership/Central American Regional Security Initiative

Q. Good afternoon. President Obama, I would like to ask you if you could explain a little bit more how you are going to distribute these 200 million throughout the region with regards to security.

And we would like to know the opinion of President Funes on the commitment of El Salvador and Central America in this effort.

President Obama. The emphasis is to work with a regional approach, and the various Central American countries have come together to help shape and design how that money might be best spent. So rather than the United States coming in and saying, here's the best way to do things, what we want to do is to hear what are the respective challenges that each country is facing.

The regional security initiatives that are already taking place, we can build on. We obviously need to focus on basic policing, security, rule of law, the judicial system; that's a component of it. But as President Funes indicated, part of the key is making sure that we're also using this to reach young people and give them the better path.

I thought President Funes gave a very eloquent response to one of my questions during our bilateral meeting. He said, "I don't want a young man in El Salvador or a young woman in El Salvador to feel that the only two paths to moving up the income ladder is either to travel north or to join a criminal enterprise."

And that's why emphasis on education and emphasizing social programs, giving young people other pathways has to be part of this overall program.

But we're in close consultation. This is a program that will be designed and led here in Central America by the respective governments. And I'm confident that President Funes will show great leadership in making sure that that money is appropriately used here in El Salvador.

President Funes. Thank you very much, President Obama, for your comments, especially for your expectations of this new contribution for the Central American region that President Obama is announcing today.

When we started with the CARSI Initiative, this initiative aimed at responding to a concern that we had as Presidents of the region, which is that organized crime, particularly as common

crime and crime in general, is not a problem only of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, or Colombia, or Mexico. It's a problem that we can only face as a region. The capacity of operating of these criminal organizations, the financial capacity to buy institutions, to permeate the different institutions and penetrate our institutions is so large that if we do not join as countries, as nations, and if we do not use the successful experiences of countries like Colombia and Mexico, we will not be able to defeat this problem.

This is why I have been insisting in international fora and with Central American integration meeting in June last year, where we said that besides trade, we need to have a regional security policy. We have submitted our request to the authorities and the Government of the United States to have greater cooperation funds earmarked to perfecting our police, modernize our military institutions, and to also perfect and modernize our public ministries, especially in the development of a greater capacity to investigate crimes, specific crimes like financial crimes. We are projecting a training program with the assistance of the United States for 150 prosecutors to specialize on the investigation of complex crimes like the organized crime.

And something that is very important—and I'm pleased to hear that President Obama agrees with us—that the efforts that we make in repression and persecution of criminals is not going to do anything unless we take away from the criminals the fertile soil that they have found in this region. And this fertile soil is thanks to the fact that we have a lot of youngsters that are living in a situation of poverty and social exclusion, exclusion from the benefits and the services that the state should give them. And this is why I insisted with President Obama that we cannot continue offering our youngsters in El Salvador and the region, or go to the United States to find employment and entertaining and education opportunities that they don't find here, or to fall in the hands of the criminal gangs, especially the gangs.

How can we avoid this? Investing more in prevention policies. Our focus as a region, and particularly as the Government of El Salvador, is that the crime, and particularly drug trafficking and the consumption of drugs, is not only going to—by attacking supply, but also demand.

This is why this afternoon I also heard with great pleasure the President of the United States reiterate that his Government has invested a large amount of money in the combat of the reduction of consumption. Without consumption, you don't have any demand, no supply, and the criminal organizations dedicated to drug trafficking cannot continue making a profit. And this is what we want to do throughout the region because Central America is no longer a transfer or a passageway, but it's also a consumption strip.

White House Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney. The first question from the White House press corps will be from Julianna Goldman of Bloomberg.

Situation in Libya

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, President Funes.

Mr. President, on Libya, coalition partners can't seem to agree on who will take the lead in the next phase of the military campaign. Can you today still assure the American people that the U.S. will be in charge for only a matter of several—a few more days?

And also, we also learned today of two American pilots who went down in Libya. We're assured that they're safe. But have you sufficiently prepared the American people for the costs of war—of course, the human costs, but also the financial costs?

President Obama. Let me first of all say, obviously, we were extraordinarily relieved to find out that these two young men were safe in American hands. As the Pentagon indicated, this appears to have been a malfunction in the aircraft, and it is a testament to our military that we had fully prepared for any contingency, including something like this, and they were able to recover these individuals rapidly.

And in fact, as part of the planning effort leading up to this, I specifically had discussions with Admiral Mullen and other of our military personnel to make sure that we had the kind of

standard recovery efforts in place, because there are risks involved. And on the day that I indicated that this was a possibility, and then on the day that I indicated that we, in fact, were moving forward, I said that there is no military operation that does not entail risk. And that's why this is always the most difficult decision that I make as Commander in Chief and as President of the United States.

Now, I have absolutely no doubt that we will be able to transfer control of this operation to an international coalition. I had discussions with Prime Minister Cameron and President Sarkozy today. In fact, NATO is meeting today as we speak to work out some of the mechanisms for command and control. I would expect that over the next several days you will have clarity and a meeting of the minds of all those who are participating in the process.

We're already seeing a significant reduction in the number of U.S. planes that are involved in operations over Libya, because, as I said initially, our job was to take our unique capabilities and create a space to shape the environment so that the operation of a no-fly zone could operate effectively and to make sure that our immediate humanitarian goals could be met.

And I just want to emphasize to the American people, because of the extraordinary capabilities and valor of our men and women in uniform, we have already saved lives. In Benghazi, a city of 700,000 people, you had the prospect of Qadhafi's forces carrying out his orders to show no mercy. That could have resulted in catastrophe in that town. Qadhafi's forces have pulled back because of this timely intervention.

And obviously, there are always risks involved in this kind of operation, but for us to be able to structure something where we bring our unique capabilities to bear to fulfill a mission that is supported by the international community against somebody who was about to direct his armed forces against his people in the most vicious of ways is something that, I think, the American people, and certainly our American military, should be proud of.

I said at the outset that this was going to be a matter of days and not weeks. And there's nothing based on how we've been able to execute over the last several days that changes that assessment.

Q. And on financial costs—[*inaudible*].

President Obama. We will continue to provide details to the American people about the costs of this operation. But because it is limited in time, scope, with a well-defined mission, we're confident that this is something that we can budget as part of our overall operations. I mean, keep in mind that there are costs involved in the rescue efforts that we are assisting in Japan. Events happen around the world in which the United States, with our unique capabilities, has to respond as a leader in the world community. We build those into our budget. This was something that we can build into our budget, and we're confident that not only can the goals be achieved, but that at the end of the day the American people are going to feel satisfied that lives were saved and people were helped. Okay.

Moderator. Now the Salvadoran media with Channels 2, 4, 6, we have Emilio Correa asking.

Immigration Reform/Development Assistance for El Salvador

Q. Good afternoon, President Obama. President, in the last few days, we have heard your statements where you talk about starting partnerships such as Partnerships for Growth and for Progress. Now we're talking about Crossroads Partnership. Going to more punctual matters, what does this consist of? Is there seed money? Is it going to be reimbursable or not? What projects are we talking about here and how much money could be generated?

And if possible, Mr. President, I would like to know about immigration, taking advantage of your presence here since we haven't been able to talk to you before. We have about 25 percent or 30 percent of our population without—well, living illegally in the United States. So what are your short-term plans, President Obama? Are you going to lobby for comprehensive reform or temporary residence for the Salvadorans that are working with the TPS or that are living with a TPS who are there? Thank you.

President Obama. Specifically on immigration reform first, as I indicated in my remarks and as I said in my State of the Union speech, I continue to believe in comprehensive immigration reform. America is a nation of laws and it is a nation of immigrants. And so our job is to create secure borders, to make sure that we're got a legal immigration system that is effective and is not frustrating for families, doesn't divide families.

But we also have to make sure that those who are in the United States illegally at this point, but in some cases have been there for a long time, in some cases have children who were born in the United States and are United States citizens, that they have a pathway to get right by the law. And several years ago, we were able to craft a bipartisan consensus, at least in the United States Senate, around this issue. Senator John McCain, Senator Ted Kennedy had a comprehensive immigration reform bill that I supported and was a part of when I was in the Senate. And we were able to get it passed through the Senate, and we couldn't get it passed through the House of Representatives.

Over the last 2 years, it's been more difficult to gain Republican support for some of these efforts. And my hope is, is that they begin to recognize over the next year that we can't solve this problem without taking a broad, comprehensive approach. And that will benefit not only those Salvadorans who are living in the United States, but it also, more importantly from the perspective of the region, can ensure that relations between neighbors and trade and economic relations between neighbors is more orderly and more secure, more regularized.

It is the right thing to do. This is the time to do it. And I will continue to push hard to make it happen. It won't be easy. The politics of this are difficult. But I am confident that ultimately we are going to get it done.

Now, with respect to particular programs, I will have my team provide a sheet that has details of how these various programs would work. We already mentioned the 200 million for security. There are other initiatives that are very important. The Partnership for Growth, the immediate plans involve our experts meeting with President Funes's economic advisers and exports to determine what exactly are the barriers for improved growth and development here in El Salvador.

So one of the ways that we are redesigning our development assistance programs is to recognize that dollars are important, but institutional reforms may end up being more important, or at least, they have to go hand in hand, because what a country like El Salvador does not want is perpetually to be looking for the outside for its own development. Ultimately, it wants to be able to find growth and tap into its own potential here inside the country.

And so those are the kinds of systematic consultations that are currently taking place, which will help determine how we can best spend any develop money that's put forward.

Of course, we already have currently a Millennium Challenge grant coming into El Salvador that involves several hundred million dollars and is helping on a wide variety of fronts. And we want to continue to build on some of the successes that are taking place there.

White House Press Secretary Carney. The next question from the White House Press Corps is Savannah Guthrie from NBC News.

Situation in Libya/Situation in the Middle East

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, President Funes. President Obama, you mentioned a few minutes ago how this mission in Libya was narrow in scope, limited in duration. But potentially it seems quite open-ended in the sense that as long as Qadhafi remains in power, civilians presumably will need protection from him. My question to you is, what is your exit strategy for U.S. military involvement if Qadhafi does not succumb to the international pressures to leave? Are you saying, essentially, the U.S. will hang in there militarily in Libya if Qadhafi hangs in there?

And in the grand tradition of U.S. press asking multipart questions, one more. Setting aside the humanitarian goals that you just mentioned a few minutes ago, can you articulate the U.S. national security interest in military action in Libya? Thank you, sir.

President Obama. The military action that we moved forward on, in conjunction with our international partners, was defined by the U.N. Security Council resolution that said we have a humanitarian threat and we need to deal with that humanitarian threat quickly, in part through a no-fly zone, in part by ensuring that humanitarian assistance can get into places that need it. And what we've done is to create the space for that to happen.

I think fairly shortly we are going to be able to say that we've achieved the objective of a no-fly zone. We will also be able to say that we have averted immediate tragedy.

Now, you were absolutely right that as long as Qadhafi remains in power, unless he changes his approach and provides the Libyan people an opportunity to express themselves freely and there are significant reforms in the Libyan Government, unless he is willing to step down, that there are still going to be potential threats towards the Libyan people.

And we will continue to support the efforts to protect the Libyan people, but we will not be in the lead. That's what the transition that I discussed has always been designed to do. We have unique capabilities. We came in, up front, fairly heavily, fairly substantially, and at considerable risk to our military personnel. And when this transition takes place, it is not going to be our planes that are maintaining the no-fly zone. It is not going to be our ships that are necessarily involved in enforcing the arms embargo. That's precisely what the other coalition partners are going to do.

And that's why building this international coalition has been so important because it means that the United States is not bearing all the cost. It means that we have confidence that we are not going in alone and it is our military that is being volunteered by others to carry out missions that are important not only to us, but are important internationally. And we will accomplish that in a relatively short period of time.

Now, with respect to our national interests, the American people and the United States have an interest, first of all, in making sure that where a brutal dictator is threatening his people and saying he will show no mercy and go door-to-door hunting people down, and we have the capacity under international sanction to do something about that, I think it's in America's international—in America's national interest to do something about it.

That doesn't mean that we can solve every problem in the world. It does mean that when you have not only the United Nations, but also the Arab League and also other countries in the Gulf who are saying, we need to intercede to make sure that a disaster doesn't happen on our watch, as has happened in the past when the international community stood idly by, it is in America's national interest to participate in that. Because nobody has a bigger stake in making sure that there are basic rules of the road that are observed, that there is some semblance of order and justice—particularly in a volatile region that's going through great changes like the Middle East—than does the United States of America.

Now, we've already seen what happened in Egypt and Tunisia: peaceful transitions. We have a huge national interest in making sure that those are successful because if Egypt can make a transition from an autocratic regime to a democracy, if Tunisia can make those same changes, they become models for a peaceful transition that at some point may be adopted by other countries in the region.

If on the other hand, they spill into chaos, in part because they've got a million Lebanese—or a million Libyans who are pouring into these countries, and their borders become less secure, and there's a breakdown of order, that could have spillover effects in the entire region.

So not only do we have a humanitarian interest, but we also have a very practical interest in making sure that the changes that are sweeping through that region are occurring in a peaceful nonviolent fashion.

And when we can have some impact on that with a relatively modest contribution as part of a broader international effort, then I absolutely believe that the costs are outweighed by the benefits, and that is what drove my decision.

And that's why I think that we need to make sure that we see this through effectively.

President Funes. We are just going to make reference to a prior question from—this is, Mr. President—with your permission, President Obama, and also to address any other doubt of the media that they may have.

I just want to go back to the matter of El Salvador and the remarks made by—[*inaudible*]—regarding the importance of these announcements made by President Obama with regards to projects that may be financed through the BRIDGE Initiative and the Partnership for Growth.

We need to place things in context. What's fundamental in my opinion in this Partnership for Growth is that the different visions at the foundation of this initiative that is driven by the Government of President Obama. It's not the traditional way of looking at the region from the perspective of the donor that looks at the receiver as that, as a mere receiver or beneficiary of the same. And I said this to President Obama: I cannot go to the United States or any other country of the world to knock on the doors of the multilateral banking system or the doors of the USAID or any other cooperation agency of the United States in order to ask for either more credits or more nonreversible cooperation funds without making a domestic effort that has not taken place in the past and that we cannot delay much further.

We need to also give our contribution in this partnership and leave our differences in that the financial aid capacity that we have. But just to include the country of El Salvador in this it's a message to the international investors that we can trust El Salvador. The Government of El Salvador is now working on a series of projects that will be presented to the intergovernment teams in this next April so that in June we can have a better idea of which of these programs or these projects are going to be financed. And we have an initiative in the port region, especially in the extension of the Comalapa airport, which I explained to President Obama in our bilateral meeting that we just had, but also in the transportation public system and also in renewable energy projects. So that once we have these projects prepared and already submitted to the intergovernment teams, we hope that in June we will have taken a decision on this regard, but from a different perspective.

No longer will it be a country that receives aid as a donor or receiver from a donor country without us doing our own efforts. And what does this effort consist of? And I already mentioned this to President Obama that we need to have a fiscal agreement that will send more funds to the Internal Revenue so that we can reactivate the economy, but also to fight against poverty and social exclusion.

This is an effort that we need to carry out. We cannot—no longer be one of the countries with the lowest tax returns, only surpassed by Guatemala. We need to be able to increase this revenue and close with about 17 percent of the GDP. It's still low compared to other countries of the region, not to mention the United States, but it's what we need to do as a nation.

But what's important in this is that we can send a message to the investors that we can invest in El Salvador, be them foreign and national investors, and that the type of partnership that we are taking about and that we are creating with the United States by initiative of the U.S. Government will then imply a joint cooperation where not only the United States will contribute with resources, but also El Salvador will. And we'll have a set of institutional and political reforms that will have transparent management of these funds.

So this is why in the following days we will send to the Legislative Assembly our public-private association that will be driven by the BRIDGE project and the Partnership for Growth. And we will continue sending all the initiatives that are necessary to create the institutional environment that will make it possible for us to have this economic predictability and also for this trust to take place with the investors.

Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, everyone.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 3 p.m. at the National Palace. In his remarks, the President referred to Vanda Pignato, wife

of President Funes; Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom; President Nicolas Sarkozy of France; and Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. President Funes referred to President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile; and former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil. He also referred to the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) and the Building Remittance Investment for Development Growth and Entrepreneurship (BRIDGE) Initiative. President Funes, a moderator, and two reporters spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena of El Salvador in San Salvador
March 22, 2011

Buenas noches. President Funes, First Lady, former Presidents Cristiani and Saca, distinguished guests, on behalf of Michelle and our daughters, thank you for the wonderful hospitality that's been shown to us here in San Salvador.

As many of you know, this has been my first trip through Latin America as President, and this is our final night. We are closer to home. I mean this in more than just a geographical sense. El Salvador is one of those places where the bonds between the United States and Latin America are strongest.

Just about every Salvadoran has a loved one or a friend in the United States—husbands and sons, mothers and daughters—working hard, sacrificing every day. They strengthen my country, and they mean so much to El Salvador. They're very much in our thoughts tonight.

In my speech in Santiago yesterday, I said that Latin America is not the stereotype of a region in perpetual conflict or trapped in an endless cycle of poverty. I repeat that tonight because many look at a country like El Salvador and only see the struggles. I'm proud to work with President Funes, a courageous leader, to meet those challenges together as partners.

But I also want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the side of this nation that is too often overlooked, which is just as real and just as important. It's the El Salvador that endures, even when the earth shakes and the floodwaters rise, because Salvadorans are people who persevere.

It's the El Salvador that has struggled for justice and human rights. And along with President Funes, I was honored to visit the cathedral this evening and pay my respects to Archbishop Romero, who remains an inspiration to people all around the world. And I see the current archbishop here. We're very grateful for the wonderful tour that you offered.

It's the El Salvador that not only forged historic accords, but has sustained them for nearly two decades, proving, in the words of your national anthem, that "happiness is found in peace."

And it's the El Salvador that gets up every day and goes to work—students, merchants, farmers, young entrepreneurs, businesspeople—who remind us that building a just and prosperous future cannot be the work of government alone; it must be the responsibility of all—of all—who love their countries.

> Of peace enjoyed in perfect happiness
> El Salvador always nobly dreamed,
> To achieve this has been Her eternal struggle,
> To keep it, Her greatest glory.

With these words, I'd like to propose a toast, if I can get a glass. [*Laughter*] To President Funes and the First Lady, for their outstanding hospitality and friendship, and to the peace and happiness that we seek: for our peoples, for the region, and for the world. May we not only achieve our dreams, may we keep them for this and for generations yet to come.

Salud.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:25 p.m. at the National Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Vanda Pignato, wife of President Funes; former

Presidents Alfredo Cristiani and Elias Antonio Saca Gonzalez of El Salvador; and Archbishop Jose Luis Escobar Alas of San Salvador, El Salvador.

Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Jerusalem, Israel
March 23, 2011

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the bombing in Jerusalem today, as well as the rockets and mortars fired from Gaza in recent days. Together with the American people, I offer my deepest condolences for those injured or killed. There is never any possible justification for terrorism. The United States calls on the groups responsible to end these attacks at once, and we underscore that Israel, like all nations, has a right to self-defense. We also express our deepest condolences for the deaths of Palestinian civilians in Gaza yesterday. We stress the importance of calm and urge all parties to do everything in their power to prevent further violence and civilian casualties.

Remarks at a Celebration of Greek Independence Day
March 25, 2011

The President. Well, good evening, everybody.

Audience members. Good evening.

The President. *Kalispera*.

Audience members. *Kalispera*.

The President. Thank you, Your Eminence, for the kind introduction. It is always an honor to welcome you here in the White House. We've been friends for quite some time now, and His Eminence always displays such grace and good humor and is so generous. We are so very grateful for your leadership.

It is a wonderful pleasure to see so many friends and leaders of the Hellenic American community here as we celebrate the 190th anniversary of Greek independence. I want to acknowledge several people. First of all, we've got some Members of Congress here. Michael Grimm from New York, where's Michael? There he is. Carolyn Maloney, also from New York; John Sarbanes, from Maryland; and then we have another guy—I don't know if he's any relation—Paul Sarbanes, also of Maryland.

We've got Ambassador Demetrios Marantis, Deputy USTR. He's got a few fans here. We've got Nicholas Karacostas, the President of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association.

I want to especially welcome Deputy Foreign Minister Dollis for traveling all the way here from Athens to join us today. I spoke with your Prime Minister, our good friend Mr. Papandreou, today, and I wanted him to extend our congratulations to the entire Greek nation. And we very much appreciate you being here to represent your Government.

We are also joined here by Greek Ambassador Kaskarelis. Where is he? There he is. Good to see you, Mr. Ambassador. We have the Cypriot Ambassador Anas—aww—[*laughter*]—Anastasiades—there you go—[*laughter*]—and his wife Maria.

Tonight we reaffirm the bond our two nations have shared for as long as we've existed. Our Founding Fathers were students of Greek philosophy and Greek history, drawing on Greek principles to guide our own Nation in its earliest days.

When it was time for Greek revolutionaries to fight for freedom, they looked to the United States for strength and support. And to this day, the United States and Greece shares a bond rooted in common values and common ideals.

As allies, we stand together, not only for our own security, but for the freedom of peoples around the world. And right now Greek and American soldiers are serving together in Afghanistan. And as we celebrate the independence of the Greek people, the United States and Greece are standing with our NATO allies

to support the Libyan people as they stand up for their own freedom.

So I just want to express the extraordinary thanks that I give to the people of Greece for their friendship and for their contributions to the life of our Nation and so many others. I also obviously want to say to all my great friends in the Greek American community how much I appreciate your support and your friendship, and I'm glad that we have one more occasion to celebrate together here in the White House. So it's wonderful to see you again, and I hope you guys have a great time today.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of America, who introduced the President; former Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes; Prime Minister Georgios Andreas Papandreou of Greece; Greece's Ambassador to the U.S. Vassilis Kaskarelis; and Cyprus's Ambassador to the U.S. Pavlos Anastasiades and his wife Maria Antonopoulou-Anastasiades.

The President's Weekly Address
March 26, 2011

Last week, when I ordered our Armed Forces to protect the Libyan people from the brutality of Muammar Qadhafi, I pledged to keep the American people fully informed. Since then, I've spoken about the limited scope and specific purpose of this mission. Today I can report that thanks to our brave men and women in uniform, we've made important progress.

As Commander in Chief, I face no greater decision than sending our military men and women into harm's way. And the United States should not, and cannot, intervene every time there's a crisis somewhere in the world.

But I firmly believe that when innocent people are being brutalized, when someone like Qadhafi threatens a bloodbath that could destabilize an entire region, and when the international community is prepared to come together to save many thousands of lives, then it's in our national interest to act. And it's our responsibility. This is one of those times.

Our military mission in Libya is clear and focused. Along with our allies and partners, we're enforcing the mandate of the United Nations Security Council. We're protecting the Libyan people from Qadhafi's forces. And we've put in place a no-fly zone and other measures to prevent further atrocities.

We're succeeding in our mission. We've taken out Libya's air defenses. Qadhafi's forces are no longer advancing across Libya. In places like Benghazi, a city of some 700,000 that Qadhafi threatened to show no mercy, his forces have been pushed back. So make no mistake, because we acted quickly, a humanitarian catastrophe has been avoided and the lives of countless civilians—innocent men, women, and children—have been saved.

As I pledged at the outset, the role of American forces has been limited. We are not putting any ground forces into Libya. Our military has provided unique capabilities at the beginning, but this is now a broad, international effort. Our allies and partners are enforcing the no-fly zone over Libya and the arms embargo at sea. Key Arab partners like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have committed aircraft. And as agreed this week, responsibility for this operation is being transferred from the United States to our NATO allies and partners.

This is how the international community should work: more nations, not just the United States, bearing the responsibility and cost of upholding peace and security.

This military effort is part of our larger strategy to support the Libyan people and hold the Qadhafi regime accountable. Together with the international community, we're delivering urgent humanitarian assistance. We're offering support to the Libyan opposition. We've frozen tens of billions of dollars of Qadhafi's assets that can help meet the needs and aspirations of the Libyan people. And every day, the pressure on Qadhafi and his regime is increasing.

Our message is clear and unwavering: Qadhafi's attacks against civilians must stop. His forces must pull back. Humanitarian assistance must be allowed to reach those in need. Those responsible for violence must be held accountable. Muammar Qadhafi has lost the confidence of his people and the legitimacy to rule, and the aspirations of the Libyan people must be realized.

In recent days, we've heard the voices of Libyans expressing their gratitude for this mission. "You saved our lives," said one Libyan. Said another, "Today, there is hope."

Every American can be proud of the lives we've saved in Libya and of the service of our men and women in uniform who once again have stood up for our interests and our ideals. And people in Libya and around the world are seeing that the United States of America stands with those who hope for a future where they can determine their own destiny.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:55 p.m. on March 25 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on March 26. In the address, the President referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 25, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 26.

Statement on the Death of Geraldine A. Ferraro
March 26, 2011

Michelle and I were saddened to learn about the passing of Geraldine Ferraro. Geraldine will forever be remembered as a trailblazer who broke down barriers for women and Americans of all backgrounds and walks of life. Whether it was as a public school teacher, assistant district attorney, Member of Congress, or candidate for Vice President, Geraldine fought to uphold America's founding ideals of equality, justice, and opportunity for all. And as our Ambassador to the U.N. Human Rights Commission, she stood up for those ideals around the world. Sasha and Malia will grow up in a more equal America because of the life Geraldine Ferraro chose to live.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to her husband John Zaccaro, her children and grandchildren, and their entire family.

Remarks at Univision's "Es el Momento" Town Hall Meeting and a Question-and-Answer Session
March 28, 2011

Univision Moderator Jorge Ramos. Mr. President, I have the first question. As a newscaster and as an anchor, I have to ask first. And I would like to ask something that everybody wants to know. You're going to talk about Libya. I don't know if you can give us something about the speech you're going to give later on for us to listen to it here at Univision. And we are going through a very difficult time. We're going through three different wars at the same time. And I was looking at the education budget in the country, and it really amazes me that every dollar that is being spent on education, we spend $10 for war and on the Department of Defense. Do we need to change that? What would you do?

The President. Well, first of all, I just want to say, Jorge, it's wonderful to be with Univision. It's wonderful to be here at Bell Multicultural. You guys are doing outstanding work.

I also want to make a confession, and that is that although I took Spanish in high school, I'm receiving translation through this earpiece. [*Laughter*] But for all the young people here, I want you guys to be studying hard because it is critical for all American students to have language skills. And I want everybody here to be working hard to make sure that you don't just

speak one language, you speak a bunch of languages. That's a priority.

Libya/Federal Budget/Education

Mr. Ramos. Let's talk about Libya then.

The President. Jorge, with respect to Libya, I am going to be addressing this issue tonight, and I've already discussed it on several occasions, including on your program. Our involvement there is going to be limited both in time and in scope. But you're absolutely right that we have a very large defense budget. Some of that is necessitated by the size of our country and the particular special role that we play around the globe. But what is true is that over the last 10 years, the defense budget was going up much more quickly than our education budget.

And we are only going to be as strong as we are here at home. If we are not strong here at home, if our economy is not growing, if our people are not getting jobs, if they are not succeeding, then we won't be able to project military strength or any other kind of strength.

And that's why in my 2012 budget, even though we have all these obligations—we're still in Afghanistan; I have ended the war in Iraq, and we've pulled 100,000 troops out, but we still have some commitments there—despite all that, my proposed budget still increases education spending by 10 percent, including 4 percent for non-college-related expenses. But we also increased the Pell grant program drastically so all these outstanding young people are going to have a better chance to go to college.

So the larger point you're making, I think, is right, that we have to constantly balance our security needs with understanding that if we're not having a strong economy, a strong workforce, and a well-educated workforce, then we're not going to be successful over the long term.

Mr. Ramos. Very well, Mr. President. One of the main problems here in the United States is that—with Hispanics especially—is that only one out of three of Hispanic students actually graduates from high school. They—you know, they drop out. And Iris Mendoza, a student from this school, has the first question. Iris?

Education

Q. Hello, Mr. President. My name is Iris Mendoza, and I attend Washington, DC—Bell Multicultural High School. And my question is: What can we do to reduce the amount of students that drop out of school before graduating?

The President. Well, I appreciate the question. And I want to reiterate something that Mr. Conde said at the outset. This is an issue that's not just important for the Latino community here in the United States. This is an issue that is critical for the success of America generally, because we already have a situation where one out of five students are Latino in our schools. And when you look at those who are 10 years old or younger, it's actually one in four. So what this means is, is that our workforce is going to be more diverse. It is going to be, to a large percentage, Latino. And if our young people are not getting the kind of education they need, we won't succeed as a nation.

Now, here's what's also important, that 8 out of 10 future jobs are going to require more than a high school education. They're going to require some sort of higher education, whether it's a community college, a 4-year college, at the very least some job training and technical training, all of which means nobody—nobody—can drop out. We can't afford to have anybody here at Bell drop out. We can't have anybody drop out anywhere in the country.

Now, there are some things that we know work. To the extent that young people are getting a good start in school and aren't falling behind, they're less likely to drop out. So that's why it's important for us to invest in early childhood education. And my budget makes sure that we put more money into that. In K through 12, we've got to make sure that we've got the highest quality teachers. We have to make sure that we have parental involvement so that we are building a culture in our community. Everybody—businesses, philanthropies, churches, whoever these young people are interacting with—they've got to hear a message that they don't have any choice,

they've got to graduate, and everybody's going to be behind them.

We know that there's some programs that will help young people catch up if they've already fallen behind. And one of the things that we've emphasized is something called Race to the Top, which is a program that says to States and school districts all across the country, if you design programs that are especially designed to get at those schools that are creating a lot of dropouts, that are not performing up to par, we'll give you extra money if you are serious about reform.

So we're going to have to take a comprehensive approach to make sure that we reduce dropout rates. And the last point I'll make on this, there are about 2,000 schools in the country where the majority of dropouts take place. I mean, we can name them. We know what these schools are. And for us to put some extra help, some intensive help, into those schools to help turn them around is something that we've really got to focus on.

Mr. Conde and I were both at a school down in Miami that used to have a 60 percent dropout rate, and now they've been able to reduce that drastically because they completely turned the school around got a new principal, got—about a third of the teachers were new, had a whole new approach, had the whole community surround them. We can do that with each of those 2,000 schools around the country. We can make a big difference.

Great question.

Mr. Ramos. As you know, the success in the students depends not only in their teachers and good administrators, it also depends on their parents. Berta Miranda is a family—is a mom.

Bilingual Education Programs/Parental Involvement in Education

Q. My name is Berta Miranda. I'm from Chile, and my daughter attends CHEC. I do know that the success of our children's education also hinges on their parents. So my question is, how can we help to fight illiteracy and lack of language knowledge, English knowledge?

The President. Well, first of all, the fact that you're here shows that you're a very involved parent, and that's where this has to start. No matter who you are, no matter where you came—come from, if you're a parent, you are the single most important factor in whether your child is going to succeed. And so starting out very young, reading to your children—even if you yourself are not an English-language speaker, reading to them in Spanish gets them used to the idea of reading and builds their vocabulary and will be building a foundation for learning. Making sure that as your children get older that you're turning off the television set and making sure that they're doing their homework—even if you, as a Spanish-speaking person, may not be able to help them with all their homework, you can make sure that they're actually doing it. Parents making sure that they're involved in their schools and going and meeting teachers.

And I know that there are some schools where parents experience not a good interaction with the schools. The schools seem to push them away, particularly if English is not their native language. But you have rights as parents to make sure that your children are getting what they need. And the more you're interacting with the teachers and the principals and the administrators, the more support you can provide to your child.

So those are all areas where parents can make a big difference. What we're trying to do as the Government is to make sure that we're providing more incentives for schools to improve their parental involvement programs. We're trying to make sure that schools are open and understand that it is up to them to provide a welcoming environment to parents so that they can be involved in their child's education.

And specifically with respect to young people who are coming to school and English may not be their native language, we've got to make sure that we continue to fund strong programs, both bilingual education programs, but also immersion programs that ensure that young people are learning English, but they're not

falling behind in their subjects even as they are learning English.

And there's a way to do that that is effective. We have schools that do it very well; there are some schools that don't do it as well. We want to lift up those models that do it well. And parents should be demanding and insisting that even if your child is not a native English speaker, there is no reason why they can't succeed in school, and schools have an obligation to make sure that those children are provided for. They have rights just like everybody else.

Mr. Ramos. Thank you very much. Mr. President, in San Salvador, we had the opportunity to have a conversation regarding deportation, and I was telling you that your Government has deported more immigrants than any other President before. And you also told me that many students in the United States, even though they are undocumented, are not deported. But Karen Maldonado sent us this video, and I will—wanted for you to watch it together with me. And I want for you to give me your opinion regarding her experience.

[*At this point, a video of Karen Maldonado presenting her question was shown.*]

Immigration Reform

Q. My question for the President is why they are saying that deportations have stopped or the detention of many students like me? Why is it that we are still receiving deportation letters like this one?

The President. Well, Jorge, as I said before, we have redesigned our enforcement practices under the law to make sure that we're focusing primarily on criminals. And so our deportation of criminals are up about 70 percent. Our deportation of noncriminals are down. And that's because we want to focus our resources on those folks who are destructive to the community. And for a young person like that young woman that we just spoke to, who's going to school, doing all the right things, we want them to succeed, which is why I have been such a strong proponent of the "DREAM Act," why I reiterated during my State of the Union speech that we need to pass the "DREAM Act." We came close in December, it almost happened.

And for those students here who aren't familiar with what the "DREAM Act" says—basically, what it says is, if you're a young person who came to this country with your parents, even if you did—were undocumented when you came here, but you were a child, you didn't make the decision, you've grown up as an American child, and we want your talents here in the United States. And if you have done right in your community, if you've been studying hard, if you've been working in school, you should be able to go ahead and get a process towards legalization and a process whereby you can be a full-fledged citizen in this country.

We almost were able to get it passed. We fell a few votes short. I believe that we can still get it done. But it's going to be very important for all the viewers of Univision, all the students who are interested in this issue, we've got to keep the pressure up on Congress. And I have to say without being partisan that the majority of my party, the Democrats, I got their votes to get this passed, but we need a little bit of help from the other side. And so all of you need to contact your Members of Congress, contact your Members of the Senate, and let them know that this is something that is the right thing to do.

America is a nation of laws, which means I, as the President, am obligated to enforce the law. I don't have a choice about that. That's part of my job. But I can advocate for changes in the law so that we have a country that is both respectful of the law, but also continues to be a great nation of immigrants. And the "DREAM Act" is a perfect example of a law that can help fix this.

Of course, I believe that we also have to have an even more comprehensive reform of our immigration system. It's broken right now. We have to have secure borders. We have to make sure that businesses are not exploiting undocumented workers, but we have to have a pathway to citizenship for those who are just looking for a better life and contributing to our country. And I'll continue to fight for that.

Presidential Powers/Immigration Reform

Mr. Ramos. Mr. President, my question will be as follows: With an Executive order, could you be able to stop deportations of the students? And if that's so, that links to another of the questions that we have received through univision.com. We have received hundreds, thousands, all related to immigration and their students. J. Tamar through univision.com told us—I'm reading—"What if at least you grant Temporary Protective Status, TPS, to undocumented students? If your answer is yes, when? And if it's no, why not?"

The President. Well, first of all, Temporary Protective Status historically has been used for special circumstances where you have immigrants to this country who are fleeing persecution in their countries, or there's some emergency situation in their native land that required them to come to the United States. So it would not be appropriate to use that just for a particular group that came here primarily, for example, because they were looking for economic opportunity.

With respect to the notion that I can just suspend deportations through Executive order, that's just not the case, because there are laws on the books that Congress has passed. And I know that everybody here at Bell is studying hard, so you know that we've got three branches of Government. Congress passes the law. The executive branch's job is to enforce and implement those laws. And then the judiciary has to interpret the laws.

There are enough laws on the books by Congress that are very clear in terms of how we have to enforce our immigration system that for me to simply through Executive order ignore those congressional mandates would not conform with my appropriate role as President.

That does not mean, though, that we can't make decisions, for example, to emphasize enforcement on those who've engaged in criminal activity. It also doesn't mean that we can't strongly advocate and propose legislation that would change the law in order to make it more fair, more just, and ultimately would help young people who are here trying to do the right thing and whose talents we want to embrace in order to succeed as a country.

Mr. Ramos. You mentioned minutes ago—you talked about the "DREAM Act." And we talked to parents and teachers, and one of the worst things in the educational system in the United States is that it allows them to go through elementary school and secondary studies—high school—but it doesn't allow them to go to college. And Marlene Aquino has a question regarding the "DREAM Act" and students that have been fighting—and they are saying publicly that they are undocumented and they are being at risk of deportation.

Immigration Reform

Q. Thank you for being here in this forum. My name is Sonia Marlene. And I'm a mother, a parent, an activist, and pro undocumented young people. After the nonpassing of the "DREAM Act" in Congress, many students asked me, "Why could I keep struggling to continue with my studies when I don't have a future in this country?" What should I answer to them, Mr. President?

The President. Well, I think that change in this country sometimes happens in fits and starts. It doesn't happen overnight. If you think of the history of the civil rights struggle, there—even after *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, there were still struggles to ensure that ultimately everybody was treated with dignity and respect.

I think with respect to the "DREAM Act," as I said, it was very close to passage. We didn't get it passed this time, but I don't want young people to be giving up, because if people in the past had given up, we probably—we wouldn't have women's rights, we wouldn't have civil rights. So many changes that we've made had to do with young people being willing to struggle and fight to make sure that their voices are heard.

And one of the things that, just to reemphasize, is if we've got talented young people here in the United States who are working hard, who aspire to college, in some cases want to serve in the military, want to serve our country, it makes no sense for us to send them away.

One of the strengths of America, compared to other countries, is that we're always attracting new talent to our shores, people who reinvigorate the American Dream. And that has to continue in this generation. And so they should know, these young people should know, that they have a President who believes in them and will continue to fight for them and try to make sure that they have full opportunities in this country.

Q. Thank you. Thank you.

Mr. Ramos. At the beginning of the show, Mr. President, we were saying why are $10 spent in wars and a dollar on schools. Somebody else asked, "Why do we help people who have more money instead of doing that to people who have less money?" The next question comes from the Jimenez family, and therefore—so this is what they want to ask you.

[*A video of the Jimenez family presenting a question was shown.*]

Education/State Budgets

Q. Hello, Mr. President. California is one of the last on the list regarding spending in schools. However, it seems that there's a lot of money for arms and for corporate bailouts, but not for school budgets. How is it our children can stay strong in our country, can survive, if we don't want to spend in their education today, a quality education?

The President. Well, the irony is, is that California used to be famous for having the best school system in the country. And that wasn't that long ago. I mean, when I was a young person—I know I seem very old to all of you—but when I was a young person, back in the seventies, eighties, everybody would say what a great public school system California had, what a great university system California had. But unfortunately, most education funding is done at the State level. And in many States, what's happened is that there have been various laws put in place that limit the ability to raise money for schools, partly by capping property taxes.

And look, I'm somebody who believes that money is not everything when it comes to schools. You've got some great schools in low-income neighborhoods that don't have a high tax base, but you've got a dynamic principal, you've got great teachers, you've got parents who are rallying around the school. You can do well even if you don't have a lot of money.

But money does make a difference in terms of being able to provide the resources, the supplemental help, the equipment, the technology, the science labs—all those things. And the fact of the matter is, is that in most States what we need is for people to reprioritize.

Part of what happened in California was, there were huge amounts of money spent on prisons and that drained away money from the school system. And if it turns out that it costs 16 or 17 or 20 thousand dollars for one inmate and you could spend an extra 3 or 4 or 5 thousand dollars in a school to keep that young people from going into prison in the first place, it's a smart investment for us to invest in the schools first.

But what's important, I think, for everyone to understand is this is typically a decision that's made at the State level. And so in each of the States—wherever you're watching, in Arizona, in New Mexico, in California, in Maryland—whatever State you're in, you should be pressing your State legislatures and your Governors to make sure that they are properly prioritizing education when it comes to the State budget, because just as a country's going to succeed because it's got the best workers, the same is going to be true in States.

Companies can locate anywhere today. And they're going to choose to locate in those places where they've got the most well-educated, best trained workforce. Because then, that saves them money. They don't have to retrain people. They know that whoever they hire, they're going to have good math skills and good science skills and good communication skills. So that's a huge competitive advantage for any State in the country. And it's important, I think, for you to make sure that all your State and local officials know this is something that you're paying attention to.

But it's a great question. Thank you.

Student Loan Programs

Mr. Ramos. One of the things that surprised me during this investigation that we ran through is that when I get eight Hispanic students together, only one of them, one out of eight of Hispanics, will go to college. I think that is just a waste of talent and energy and a life. And Kenrry Alvarado has a question regarding—instead of like—changing that number, who knows, that eight or seven that can go, that most of them can actually attend school.

Q. Hello, Mr. President. My name is Kenrry Alvarado. I attend Bell Multicultural, and I have great aspirations to be able to attend university. Before, a student was able to receive two scholarships a year to pay for college; now that student can only have one. What is your Government going to do to keep the Pell scholarship without cutting the budget for education?

The President. Well, first of all, I expect you to go to college. So I'm confident that you're going to succeed. I believe in you.

Here's what we've done over the last 2 years. First of all, we increased the level of Pell grants. So now you can get up to $800 more in Pell grants every year than you were able to do 2 years ago because of changes that we made.

We also made Pell grants available to millions more students around the country. So we expanded eligibility so that more young people could get access to student loans that would help—and grants that would help them pay for college.

The way we did this—the student loan program through the Government had been previously funneled through banks, and the banks were taking out a profit on the student loan program, even though these were all loans that were guaranteed by the U.S. Government. So the banks weren't taking any risks. They were basically just processing these loans, but they were taking a couple billion dollars off the top in profits. And we said, well, why do we have to go through the banks? Why don't we just give these loans directly to the students? That will save us billions of dollars. That way we can expand the program, make sure that more young people can go to college. So that's what we have already implemented.

In addition, what we've said is that starting in 2014, so right about when you guys are—some of you are starting college, in some cases, some of you will be right in the middle of college, we're going to institute a program whereby your loan repayments will not have to exceed more than 10 percent of your income.

Now, this is something very important for all of you, because I speak from experience. Michelle and I, we didn't come from wealthy families. So we came from families a lot like yours, and we had to take out all these student loans to go to college and law school. By the time we were out, we had, I think, between us $120,000 worth of debt. It took us 10 years to pay it off. And we were lucky because we both got law degrees; we could make enough money to pay that debt.

But let's say that we had wanted to teach, and we were only making—what's a teacher making these days? [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Not enough.

The President. Not enough, is that what somebody said? [*Laughter*] Or you wanted to go into public service or work for a nonprofit. You might not be able to make enough to afford servicing $120,000 worth of debt or $60,000 worth of debt. So what we said is, we're going to cap at 10 percent. And we will give you additional help if you go into helping professions like teaching that are so important to our future.

The bottom line is this. We've made enormous strides over the last 2 years. If you are working hard, if you guys are getting good grades in school, if you are ready to be admitted to college, there's no reason why you should not be able to afford to go to college. We're going to make sure that we're helping to provide you the money you need. All right?

Bullying and Harassment Prevention Efforts

Mr. Ramos. Well, Kenrry, I don't know any other student that the President of the United States wants for you to go to university or col-

lege. We'll talk to you in 4 more years, okay? [*Laughter*]

Mr. President, one of the biggest tragedies is that you don't have to die to go to school. And many of the—our students are suffering bad; "bullying" is what it's called in English. They're being abused at school. And you know, you and your wife have been involved in a program to avoid that to happen. But the bottom line is, at least one of four students go to school and instead of studying, they are at risk of being wounded or even die. Jessica Bermudez sent us a video. I don't know how many thousands of letters do you receive, but you received one from her. And this is what she wrote.

[*A video of Masika Bermudez presenting her question was shown.*]

Q. Mr. President, I wrote you a letter after my son passed away, but you never answered. It's been 2 years since Jaheem committed suicide, and I haven't been able to get any legal remedy that would do justice to my son. A campaign is not enough. Would you be willing to pass a Federal law that sanctions bullying like the type of my son suffered?

The President. Well, obviously, we're heartbroken by a story like that, and we've been seeing reports in the news, and some young people here, you've probably seen young people who took their own lives because they had been experiencing such terrible bullying and peer pressure in the schools.

Now, look, bullying has always existed. I've said before, when I was a kid, I was teased: I had a different name, I had an unusual background, I had big ears. [*Laughter*] And so all of us have been bullied at some point, except maybe Jorge, because Jorge was very handsome and cool in school, I'm sure. So—[*laughter*].

Mr. Ramos. Don't think so. I don't think so.

The President. But—so all of us have experienced this to some degree or another. But it's gotten worse, partly because of new communications, all right? You guys understand this better than I do, but Facebook, Twit—Twitters—[*laughter*]—you know, all that stuff makes for added pressure not just in school, but also outside of school. You can't escape it.

And so what we did was we had a conference at the White House where we convened interested groups from across the country—parent organizations, philanthropies, student organizations—to find ways that—strategies that we could put in place to reduce bullying.

Now, one of the most powerful tools, it turns out, is students themselves. And there are schools where young people have done surveys to find out how much bullying is taking place in school and how secure do you feel in the classroom. And then the students themselves started an entire campaign in the schools to say, we're not going to tolerate bullying, and in fact, if we see somebody bullying, we're going to call them out on it. And that peer pressure can actually end up making as much of a difference as just about anything.

But obviously, we are interested in finding additional strategies for how we can reduce this epidemic of bullying that's taking place. And the young people here, if you have suggestions in terms of how we should approach these problems, we want to listen to you. And if you go to the White House web site, whitehouse.gov, that will give you a set of tools and strategies that we're pursuing in terms of trying to make a difference on this issue.

Immigration Reform/Health Care Reform/Education/Parental Involvement in Education

Mr. Ramos. As you know, Mr. President, we are pressuring parents for them to help their children. And this is what they're telling us through Univision and univision.com, is that maybe they don't speak English, or they don't have the time because they are working hard. Maybe they need to—they are concerned about immigration problems. But Margarita Gramajo is a parent, and she will speak for herself.

Q. Good morning, Mr. President. My name is Margarita Gramajo. I know many parents that don't speak English, and they also have to work long hours to be able to feed their families. I would like to know what your Government can do. How can you help these parents

so they are better able to support their children's education?

The President. Well, the first thing we can do is make sure that parents have economic opportunities, that they've got a job that pays a decent wage. Obviously, in many immigrant communities, families and parents may be working two or three jobs because they're making such low wages. Oftentimes, they don't have benefits, so if they get sick, they don't have a place to turn, and that becomes an added burden. And so overall, one of the most important things we can do is just make life easier for those who don't make a lot of money and are sometimes working in the underground economy. And that's why comprehensive immigration reform is important. That's why our health care reforms that will provide health insurance for a lot of families that are out there is so important, because that will relieve some of the financial pressure and burden.

But when it comes to schools, as I said before, I want schools to welcome parents. I want schools to go out there actively calling parents and finding out, how can we work with you to make sure your students can achieve? How can we enlist you in the project of making sure your young people graduate from high school, go to college, and move on to a career? If a school is not doing that, if it's not actively reaching out to parents, then it's not doing its job.

And my Secretary of Education is sitting right in front of you, Arne Duncan. And he travels all across the country, and a lot of what we do when we talk to schools is telling them how important parental involvement is and trying to recruit parents.

Now, if they don't speak English, then it's important for those schools to think about strategies to have translators in the schools to help them communicate with the teachers and the principals. If it turns out that the school budgets are tight and they can't afford to hire translators, then we should enlist community members who are bilingual to come in and volunteer on parent-teacher meetings.

This is where philanthropies can make a big difference. This is where churches can make a big difference. Because there's no reason why the community can't also mobilize to support parents to make sure that they are able to take the time to meet with teachers and support the overall process of education.

So I can't make a parent who's not interested interested. Ultimately, that has to come from the parent him or herself. But what I can do is make sure that the school knows how important the parent is, and that's something that we are emphasizing in every program that we do. And when we evaluate, for example, programs like Race to the Top, where we're looking to give extra money to schools, one of the criteria we look at is, do you have a smart plan for getting parents involved? Because oftentimes, that may be one of the indicators of success. All right?

Education/Education Reform

Mr. Ramos. One of the main concerns that parents—not only is that they're poor, one out of four is poor, but besides that, there's a huge need for them to work, and who are they going to leave their children with? Early development—who will take care of my child when they have to go to work? Belkys Martinez has the next question, also from a mother, from a parent. Belkys.

The President. Belkys is over here?

Mr. Ramos. Yes. We hear you, Belkys. Go ahead.

Q. Well, good evening, Mr. President. My name is Belkys Martinez, and my children attend bilingual education in CentroNia. And this is my question: I would like to know what are you going to do, what your Presidency is going to do, to keep the bilingual programs and the Head Start bilingual program—early Head Start?

The President. Well, one of the things that we've already done in my first 2 years, as part of the Recovery Act, was to put several billion additional dollars into Head Start programs and early childhood education programs.

The Latino community is a young population, and so there are a lot of young kids. So they need high-quality early childhood education, high-quality daycare, high-quality Head

Start programs, more than just about any other community. Unfortunately, actually, they are underrepresented in these programs, and we need to do more to provide that kind of support. So in our new budget we're also putting additional resources into early childhood education.

This is something that will pay big dividends for the entire society down the road. Because what we know is, when kids get a good start, when they come to school prepared, then they are more likely to stay on grade level and not fall behind.

On the other hand, if a child comes to school and they don't know their colors, they don't know their letters, they're not accustomed to being read to, then they're starting off at a disadvantage. And kids can overcome those disadvantages—I'm somebody who never gives up on any kid—but let's face it, the longer they're behind, the more discouraged they get. They may get turned off from school, and ultimately, they end up dropping out.

So we're already putting more money into these programs. It's not enough. Waiting lines for high-quality childcare is still too long. We've got to do more.

The other thing is, in addition to more money, we have to reform many of these programs, because, frankly, sometimes a childcare program may look nice on the outside, but when you get inside, it turns out that the instructors there, they're not professionally trained, they don't know anything about early childhood development. They're basically just babysitters, which is fine if you're going out for an evening with your spouse, but if these folks are going to be with your child each and every day for 5 hours, 6 hours, 8 hours, you want somebody who knows—who's been professionally trained and understands how to make sure that you're giving a good foundation of learning to children.

And so we're doing a lot of work in improving professional development and the quality of the programs, even as we increase the money to support subsidies for those programs.

Standardized Testing in Schools

Mr. Ramos. All throughout the program, we have talked about different topics, very important, giant concepts, for most of them, but the main concerns of our students are more concrete. It's about tests. When was the last time you took a test? Do you remember that?

The President. Let me tell you, I am tested every day. [*Laughter*] I was tested when I appeared on Jorge's program a couple of—4 days ago. [*Laughter*] He's a very tough instructor, a tough—he's a tough grader. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Ramos. You passed your test. Luis Zelaya has a question regarding tests.

Q. My name is Luis Zelaya, and I'm going to attend my last year here in Bell Multicultural High School. Students go through a lot of tests. Could you reduce the amount of tests? For example, if a student passes a test, he shouldn't take the same test next year.

The President. Well, I think probably what you're referring to are standardized tests, because if you're just talking about your math or your science or your English test, tough luck. [*Laughter*] You've got to keep on taking those tests, because that's part of the way that teachers are going to know whether you're making progress and whether you understand the subject matter.

What is true, though, is that we have piled on a lot of standardized tests on our kids. Now, there's nothing wrong with a standardized test being given occasionally just to give a baseline of where kids are at. Malia and Sasha, my two daughters, they just recently took a standardized test. But it wasn't a high-stakes test. It wasn't a test where they had to panic. I mean, they didn't even really know that they were going to take it ahead of time. They didn't study for it; they just went ahead and took it. And it was a tool to diagnose what—where they were strong, where they were weak, and how—and what the teachers needed to emphasize.

Too often what we've been doing is using these tests to punish students or to, in some cases, punish schools. And so what we've said is, let's find a test that everybody agrees makes sense, let's apply it in a less pressure-packed

atmosphere, let's figure out whether we have to do it every year or whether we can do it maybe every several years. And let's make sure that that's not the only way we're judging whether a school is doing well.

Because there are other criteria. What's the attendance rate? How are young people performing in terms of basic competency on projects? There are other ways of us measuring whether students are doing well or not.

So what I want to do is—one thing I never want to see happen is schools that are just teaching to the test. Because then you're not learning about the world, you're not learning about different cultures, you're not learning about science, you're not learning about math. All you're learning about is how to fill out a little bubble on an exam and the little tricks that you need to do in order to take a test. And that's not going to make education interesting to you. And young people do well in stuff that they're interested in. They're not going to do as well if it's boring.

So now, I still want you to know, though, you're going to have to take some tests, man. [*Laughter*] So you're not going to get completely out of that. All right?

Teaching Profession/Recruiting and Training Teachers

Mr. Ramos. Our host here is Maria Tukeva, he's the principal of Columbia Heights Educational Campus. And the next thing has to do with teachers and to hire the teachers and get better pay for the teachers.

Q. Mr. President, first of all, thank you so much again for the great honor of your presence here—for having you here. We have a very important problem: the lack of African American teachers and Latinos. They have to have role models that they can relate to. How can we create a training and recruiting program for African Americans and Latino teachers?

The President. I think that is a great question. This is a great question. I'm not sure I'm going to get these statistics exactly right, but I think that if the percentage of Latino students now is 20 percent, percentage of African American students might be 12, 15 percent, the number of African American and Latino teachers may only be 3 or 4 percent, maybe 5 percent. And when it comes to male teachers, it's even lower. That's a problem.

So there are a couple things that we can do. Number one is, I think it's very important for us to say to young people who are thinking about a career, think about teaching. There's no job that's more important and is going to give you more satisfaction and will give you more impact and influence over your community than if you go into teaching.

And so we're trying to constantly elevate teaching as a profession. And I think we as a society have to do that. Because young people, they're kind of seeing what appears to be valued, and if all they see are basketball players and rappers and—then that's where they'll gravitate to. And if, on the other hand, they see that teachers are being lifted up as important, then they'll think about teaching as a career. So that's part number one.

Part number two, we're working to figure out how to do more recruitment in Historically Black Colleges and Universities, in Hispanic-serving institutions. We need to get in there and say to young people: Consider teaching as a career. And I know that that's something that Arne Duncan has emphasized.

I'm going to be giving a commencement at Miami Dade College, which, if I'm not mistaken, is the single largest institution serving Hispanic students in the country. President Padron is here, who also happens to chair my Council on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Students. And one of the things that I want to do when I'm there, I'll speak to the fact that I want a bunch of those young people going into teaching.

So we've got to go to where the students are, get them early, get them in the pipeline, provide them the outstanding training that they need, and make sure then they're supported as they go through. Because part of the challenge in teaching, it's not just enough to recruit the teacher. Once the teacher is in the classroom, they've got to have support systems in place, professional development in place, so that they can learn their trade.

Because it's like anything else. I mean, there's no job where you would just start off the first day, and suddenly, you know exactly what you're doing. Jorge, I'm sure, was a very young person when he became news anchor, but I'm sure he had to get some tips, and he got better and better as time went on. Certainly, that's true for me as a public servant, as an elected official. Well, teachers are the same way.

So we've got to have professional development programs. We've got to have mechanisms to make sure that people succeed over time. But I'm confident that if we give them the opportunity, there are going to be a lot of young people who want to pursue this career.

Technology in Education

Mr. Ramos. Not long ago, I was having a conversation with my son. Nicolas is only 12 years old, and he couldn't believe that I grew up in a world where there were no cell phones, no Internet, no computers. [*Laughter*] So do you have your BlackBerry with you, or do you have an iPhone? What do you have?

The President. You know, I took my BlackBerry off for this show, because I didn't want it going off, and that would be really embarrassing. But usually, I carry a BlackBerry around.

Mr. Ramos. Do you have an iPad?

The President. I do have an iPad.

Mr. Ramos. Your own computer?

The President. I've got my own computer.

Mr. Ramos. Very well. [*Laughter*]

The President. Jorge, I'm the President of the United States. You think I've got a—[*laughter*]—you think I've got to—[*laughter*]—you think I've got to go borrow somebody's computer? [*Laughter*] Hey, man, can I borrow your computer? [*Laughter*] How about you? You got one?

Mr. Ramos. Okay, Diana. Diana has a question regarding computers. So go ahead, Diana.

Q. Hello, Mr. President, my name is Diana Castillo, and I attend Bell. My question is, do you believe that the new technology like iPads, computers, helps students in their education? And if that is so, what can be done so we can have access to this technology?

Mr. Ramos. Have a minute—I'm afraid I'll have to tell the most powerful man in the world that he only has 1 minute.

The President. The—actually, the truth is it can make a difference. If the schools know how to use the technology well, especially now with the Internet, it means that students can access information from anywhere in the world. And that's a powerful tool.

So a lot of schools that we've seen now have every student getting a computer. We visited a school up in—where was that? It was in Boston, at Boston Tech? Is that what it's called? And each student gets a computer. And they were able to do science experiments and get the information right on the screen directly as they were working in the labs.

So what we want to do is encourage schools to use technology. But technology is not a magic bullet. If you have a computer, but you don't have the content and you don't have teachers who know how to design good classes around the computer, it's not going to make a difference. So it's not just the technology. We also have to make sure that we have the teachers that are trained to work with students so they can use that technology to explore all these—all the information that's available out there today.

Mr. Ramos. It's my understanding that you also wanted to address our audience—last words.

The President. Well, first of all, I just want to thank again Univision for hosting this town hall. Part of the reason why we felt this is so important is because the Latino community in this country will be a key for our future success. And all the young people who are sitting here are going to be a key to our success. And that means that everybody has to be involved in this project of lifting up graduation rates, lifting up performance in things like math and science, making sure that young people are getting education beyond high school so that they are prepared for the careers of the future.

And what I want to say is that the Government can do its part. We can increase funding for education. We can make college more affordable through grant programs and loan

programs. But we can't do it alone. Ultimately, everybody has to be involved, and that includes the students here.

And I just want to say to all the young people here: This is a competitive world now, and you can't expect to be able to just find a job just because you're willing to work. If you haven't prepared through a good education, you are going to be trapped in low-end jobs. And so you've got to bring an attitude of hard work and pursuing excellence each and every day. That's what you have to bring to the classroom. That's what we need as a country. And if we do—if we all work together, then I'm confident that not only is the Latino community going to succeed, but the American family is going to thrive and succeed in the 21st century.

Mr. Ramos. Mr. President, and lastly I would like—wanted to tell you, there are more than 50 million Hispanics, and you are the first African American President, with great education, of course. And we hope that we have the first Latino President soon. Thank you for being here.

The President. They may be sitting here. Who knows?

Mr. Ramos. Definitely. Thank you so much for trusting Univision. Thank you so much.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. at Bell Multicultural High School. In his remarks, he referred to Cesar Conde, president, Univision Networks; and Eduardo J. Padron, president, Miami Dade College. A participant referred to the Columbia Heights Educational Campus (CHEC), which houses Bell Multicultural High School. Mr. Ramos and participants spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Address to the Nation on the Situation in Libya
March 28, 2011

Tonight I'd like to update the American people on the international effort that we have led in Libya: what we've done, what we plan to do, and why this matters to us.

I want to begin by paying tribute to our men and women in uniform who, once again, have acted with courage, professionalism, and patriotism. They have moved with incredible speed and strength. Because of them and our dedicated diplomats, a coalition has been forged and countless lives have been saved.

Meanwhile, as we speak, our troops are supporting our ally Japan, leaving Iraq to its people, stopping the Taliban's momentum in Afghanistan, and going after Al Qaida all across the globe. As Commander in Chief, I'm grateful to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coastguardsmen, and to their families. And I know all Americans share in that sentiment.

For generations, the United States of America has played a unique role as an anchor of global security and as an advocate for human freedom. Mindful of the risks and costs of military action, we are naturally reluctant to use force to solve the world's many challenges. But when our interests and values are at stake, we have a responsibility to act. That's what happened in Libya over the course of these last 6 weeks.

Libya sits directly between Tunisia and Egypt, two nations that inspired the world when their people rose up to take control of their own destiny. For more than four decades, the Libyan people have been ruled by a tyrant, Muammar Qadhafi. He has denied his people freedom, exploited their wealth, murdered opponents at home and abroad, and terrorized innocent people around the world, including Americans who were killed by Libyan agents.

Last month, Qadhafi's grip of fear appeared to give way to the promise of freedom. In cities and towns across the country, Libyans took to the streets to claim their basic human rights. As one Libyan said, "For the first time we finally have hope that our nightmare of 40 years will soon be over."

Faced with this opposition, Qadhafi began attacking his people. As President, my immedi-

ate concern was the safety of our citizens, so we evacuated our Embassy and all Americans who sought our assistance. Then we took a series of swift steps in a matter of days to answer Qadhafi's aggression. We froze more than $33 billion of Qadhafi's regime's assets. Joining with other nations at the United Nations Security Council, we broadened our sanctions, imposed an arms embargo, and enabled Qadhafi and those around him to be held accountable for their crimes. I made it clear that Qadhafi had lost the confidence of his people and the legitimacy to lead, and I said that he needed to step down from power.

In the face of the world's condemnation, Qadhafi chose to escalate his attacks, launching a military campaign against the Libyan people. Innocent people were targeted for killing. Hospitals and ambulances were attacked. Journalists were arrested, sexually assaulted, and killed. Supplies of food and fuel were choked off. Water for hundreds of thousands of people in Misurata was shut off. Cities and towns were shelled, mosques were destroyed, and apartment buildings reduced to rubble. Military jets and helicopter gunships were unleashed upon people who had no means to defend themselves against assaults from the air.

Confronted by this brutal repression and a looming humanitarian crisis, I ordered warships into the Mediterranean. European allies declared their willingness to commit resources to stop the killing. The Libyan opposition and the Arab League appealed to the world to save lives in Libya. And so at my direction, America led an effort with our allies at the United Nations Security Council to pass a historic resolution that authorized a no-fly zone to stop the regime's attacks from the air and further authorized all necessary measures to protect the Libyan people.

Ten days ago, having tried to end the violence without using force, the international community offered Qadhafi a final chance to stop his campaign of killing or face the consequences. Rather than stand down, his forces continued their advance, bearing down on the city of Benghazi, home to nearly 700,000 men, women, and children who sought their freedom from fear.

At this point, the United States and the world faced a choice. Qadhafi declared he would show no mercy to his own people. He compared them to rats and threatened to go door to door to inflict punishment. In the past, we have seen him hang civilians in the streets and kill over a thousand people in a single day. Now we saw regime forces on the outskirts of the city. We knew that if we wanted—if we waited one more day, Benghazi, a city nearly the size of Charlotte, could suffer a massacre that would have reverberated across the region and stained the conscience of the world.

It was not in our national interest to let that happen. I refused to let that happen. And so 9 days ago, after consulting the bipartisan leadership of Congress, I authorized military action to stop the killing and enforce U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973.

We struck regime forces approaching Benghazi to save that city and the people within it. We hit Qadhafi's troops in neighboring Ajdabiya, allowing the opposition to drive them out. We hit Qadhafi's air defenses, which paved the way for a no-fly zone. We targeted tanks and military assets that had been choking off towns and cities, and we cut off much of their source of supply. And tonight I can report that we have stopped Qadhafi's deadly advance.

In this effort, the United States has not acted alone. Instead, we have been joined by a strong and growing coalition. This includes our closest allies: nations like the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Turkey, all of whom have fought by our sides for decades. And it includes Arab partners like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, who have chosen to meet their responsibilities to defend the Libyan people.

To summarize then, in just 1 month, the United States has worked with our international partners to mobilize a broad coalition, secure an international mandate to protect civilians, stop an advancing army, prevent a massacre, and establish a no-fly zone with our allies and partners. To lend some perspective on how rapidly this military and diplomatic response came

together, when people were being brutalized in Bosnia in the 1990s, it took the international community more than a year to intervene with air power to protect civilians. It took us 31 days.

Moreover, we've accomplished these objectives consistent with the pledge that I made to the American people at the outset of our military operations. I said that America's role would be limited, that we would not put ground troops into Libya, that we would focus our unique capabilities on the front end of the operation and that we would transfer responsibility to our allies and partners. Tonight we are fulfilling that pledge.

Our most effective alliance, NATO, has taken command of the enforcement of the arms embargo and the no-fly zone. Last night NATO decided to take on the additional responsibility of protecting Libyan civilians. This transfer from the United States to NATO will take place on Wednesday. Going forward, the lead in enforcing the no-fly zone and protecting civilians on the ground will transition to our allies and partners, and I am fully confident that our coalition will keep the pressure on Qadhafi's remaining forces.

In that effort, the United States will play a supporting role, including intelligence, logistical support, search-and-rescue assistance, and capabilities to jam regime communications. Because of this transition to a broader, NATO-based coalition, the risk and cost of this operation—to our military and to American taxpayers—will be reduced significantly.

So for those who doubted our capacity to carry out this operation, I want to be clear: The United States of America has done what we said we would do.

That's not to say that our work is complete. In addition to our NATO responsibilities, we will work with the international community to provide assistance to the people of Libya, who need food for the hungry and medical care for the wounded. We will safeguard the more than $33 billion that was frozen from the Qadhafi regime so that it's available to rebuild Libya. After all, the money doesn't belong to Qadhafi or to us, it belongs to the Libyan people. And we'll make sure they receive it.

Tomorrow Secretary Clinton will go to London, where she will meet with the Libyan opposition and consult with more than 30 nations. These discussions will focus on what kind of political effort is necessary to pressure Qadhafi, while also supporting a transition to the future that the Libyan people deserve, because while our military mission is narrowly focused on saving lives, we continue to pursue the broader goal of a Libya that belongs not to a dictator, but to its people.

Now, despite the success of our efforts over the past week, I know that some Americans continue to have questions about our efforts in Libya. Qadhafi has not yet stepped down from power, and until he does, Libya will remain dangerous. Moreover, even after Qadhafi does leave power, 40 years of tyranny has left Libya fractured and without strong civil institutions. The transition to a legitimate government that is responsive to the Libyan people will be a difficult task. And while the United States will do our part to help, it will be a task for the international community and, more importantly, a task for the Libyan people themselves.

In fact, much of the debate in Washington has put forward a false choice when it comes to Libya. On the one hand, some question why America should intervene at all, even in limited ways, in this distant land. They argue that there are many places in the world where innocent civilians face brutal violence at the hands of their government, and America should not be expected to police the world, particularly when we have so many pressing needs here at home.

It's true that America cannot use our military wherever repression occurs. And given the costs and risks of intervention, we must always measure our interests against the need for action. But that cannot be an argument for never acting on behalf of what's right. In this particular country, Libya, at this particular moment, we were faced with the prospect of violence on a horrific scale. We had a unique ability to stop that violence: an international mandate for action, a broad coalition prepared to join us, the support of Arab countries, and a plea for help from the Libyan people themselves. We also

had the ability to stop Qadhafi's forces in their tracks without putting American troops on the ground.

To brush aside America's responsibility as a leader, and more profoundly, our responsibilities to our fellow human beings under such circumstances would have been a betrayal of who we are. Some nations may be able to turn a blind eye to atrocities in other countries. The United States of America is different. And as President, I refused to wait for the images of slaughter and mass graves before taking action.

Moreover, America has an important strategic interest in preventing Qadhafi from overrunning those who oppose him. A massacre would have driven thousands of additional refugees across Libya's borders, putting enormous strains on the peaceful yet fragile transitions in Egypt and Tunisia. The democratic impulses that are dawning across the region would be eclipsed by the darkest form of dictatorship, as repressive leaders concluded that violence is the best strategy to cling to power. The writ of the United Nations Security Council would have been shown to be little more than empty words, crippling that institution's future credibility to uphold global peace and security. So while I will never minimize the costs involved in military action, I am convinced that a failure to act in Libya would have carried a far greater price for America.

Now, just as there are those who have argued against intervention in Libya, there are others who have suggested that we broaden our military mission beyond the task of protecting the Libyan people and do whatever it takes to bring down Qadhafi and usher in a new government.

Of course, there is no question that Libya and the world would be better off with Qadhafi out of power. I, along with many other world leaders, have embraced that goal and will actively pursue it through nonmilitary means. But broadening our military mission to include regime change would be a mistake.

The task that I assigned our forces—to protect the Libyan people from immediate danger and to establish a no-fly zone—carries with it a U.N. mandate and international support. It's also what the Libyan opposition asked us to do. If we tried to overthrow Qadhafi by force, our coalition would splinter. We would likely have to put U.S. troops on the ground to accomplish that mission or risk killing many civilians from the air. The dangers faced by our men and women in uniform would be far greater. So would the costs and our share of the responsibility for what comes next.

To be blunt, we went down that road in Iraq. Thanks to the extraordinary sacrifices of our troops and the determination of our diplomats, we are hopeful about Iraq's future. But regime change there took 8 years, thousands of American and Iraqi lives, and nearly a trillion dollars. That is not something we can afford to repeat in Libya.

As the bulk of our military effort ratchets down, what we can do, and will do, is support the aspirations of the Libyan people. We have intervened to stop a massacre, and we will work with our allies and partners to maintain the safety of civilians. We will deny the regime arms, cut off its supplies of cash, assist the opposition, and work with other nations to hasten the day when Qadhafi leaves power. It may not happen overnight, as a badly weakened Qadhafi tries desperately to hang on to power. But it should be clear to those around Qadhafi and to every Libyan that history is not on Qadhafi's side. With the time and space that we have provided for the Libyan people, they will be able to determine their own destiny, and that is how it should be.

Let me close by addressing what this action says about the use of America's military power and America's broader leadership in the world under my Presidency.

As Commander in Chief, I have no greater responsibility than keeping this country safe. And no decision weighs on me more than when to deploy our men and women in uniform. I've made it clear that I will never hesitate to use our military swiftly, decisively, and unilaterally when necessary to defend our people, our homeland, our allies, and our core interests. That's why we're going after Al Qaida wherever they seek a foothold. That is why we continue to fight in Afghanistan, even as we

have ended our combat mission in Iraq and removed more than 100,000 troops from that country.

There will be times, though, when our safety is not directly threatened, but our interests and our values are. Sometimes the course of history poses challenges that threaten our common humanity and our common security: responding to natural disasters, for example, or preventing genocide and keeping the peace, ensuring regional security and maintaining the flow of commerce. These may not be America's problems alone, but they are important to us. They're problems worth solving. And in these circumstances, we know that the United States, as the world's most powerful nation, will often be called upon to help.

In such cases, we should not be afraid to act, but the burden of action should not be America's alone. As we have in Libya, our task is instead to mobilize the international community for collective action. Because contrary to the claims of some, American leadership is not simply a matter of going it alone and bearing all of the burden ourselves. Real leadership creates the conditions and coalitions for others to step up as well, to work with allies and partners so that they bear their share of the burden and pay their share of the costs, and to see that the principles of justice and human dignity are upheld by all.

That's the kind of leadership we've shown in Libya. Of course, even when we act as part of a coalition, the risks of any military action will be high. Those risks were realized when one of our planes malfunctioned over Libya. Yet when one of our airmen parachuted to the ground, in a country whose leader has so often demonized the United States, in a region that has such a difficult history with our country, this American did not find enemies. Instead, he was met by people who embraced him. One young Libyan who came to his aid said: "We are your friends. We are so grateful to those men who are protecting the skies."

This voice is just one of many in a region where a new generation is refusing to be denied their rights and opportunities any longer.

Yes, this change will make the world more complicated for a time. Progress will be uneven, and change will come differently to different countries. There are places, like Egypt, where this change will inspire us and raise our hopes. And then there will be places, like Iran, where change is fiercely suppressed. The dark forces of civil conflict and sectarian war will have to be averted and difficult political and economic concerns will have to be addressed.

The United States will not be able to dictate the pace and scope of this change. Only the people of the region can do that. But we can make a difference.

I believe that this movement of change cannot be turned back and that we must stand alongside those who believe in the same core principles that have guided us through many storms: our opposition to violence directed at one's own people; our support for a set of universal rights, including the freedom for people to express themselves and choose their leaders; our support for governments that are ultimately responsive to the aspirations of the people.

Born, as we are, out of a revolution by those who longed to be free, we welcome the fact that history is on the move in the Middle East and North Africa, and that young people are leading the way. Because wherever people long to be free, they will find a friend in the United States. Ultimately, it is that faith, those ideals that are the true measure of American leadership.

My fellow Americans, I know that at a time of upheaval overseas, when the news is filled with conflict and change, it can be tempting to turn away from the world. And as I've said before, our strength abroad is anchored in our strength here at home. That must always be our north star: the ability of our people to reach their potential, to make wise choices with our resources, to enlarge the prosperity that serves as a wellspring for our power, and to live the values that we hold so dear.

But let us also remember that for generations, we have done the hard work of protecting our own people, as well as millions around the globe. We have done so because we know that our own future is safer, our own future is

brighter, if more of mankind can live with the bright light of freedom and dignity.

Tonight let us give thanks for the Americans who are serving through these trying times and the coalition that is carrying our effort forward. And let us look to the future with confidence and hope not only for our own country, but for all those yearning for freedom around the world.

Thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. from the National Defense University at Fort Lesley J. McNair. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya.

Remarks at the Dedication of the Ronald H. Brown United States Mission to the United Nations in New York City
March 29, 2011

Thank you. Everybody, please be seated. I am so grateful to be here in this beautiful space. Let me begin by thanking the Brown family for making me a part of this celebration. I want to thank President Clinton for his leadership and his outstanding example when it comes to foreign affairs. I want to thank my outstanding—and I mean outstanding—U.N. Ambassador, Susan Rice; and the members of the diplomatic community who are here for your wonderful work; our dedicated U.N. Mission staff. I want to thank Charlie Rangel for helping to make this day possible. Mayor Dinkins, it's wonderful to see you; all the great friends of Ron Brown.

It is a pleasure to be here. I only met Ron Brown once. I was primarily an admirer from afar. Thank you, Patti, also for your pipes. [*Laughter*]

Unlike Ambassador Rice, I didn't grow up next door, playing basketball on the Brown family court. Although now I know where she got her jump shot and where her brother John got his jump shot. We play occasionally in the way-over-40 league. [*Laughter*]

Unlike many of you, I didn't directly experience his irrepressible spirit—always the best-dressed guy in the room—I'm sure he gave some tips to these two—[*laughter*]—and the most confident, never losing his cool, an outlook, as Ted Kennedy put it, where "no, you can't" always became "yes, you can." So Ron Brown was my kind of guy. [*Laughter*]

Unlike President Clinton, I didn't serve with Ron Brown, whose legacy is measured in the lives he touched and the memories that all of you carry. And coming to the podium as the final speaker, I was thinking—once again, everything has been said, and once again, Bill Clinton has said it better than I could. [*Laughter*]

But while I didn't know Ron Brown personally, I knew his story, and I drew inspiration from that story. And so when you say he'd be proud that I'm President, I think it's fair to say that I'm President in part because of him: because of the example he set; because of the organization that he brought to the Democratic Party; because his capacity to get Bill Clinton elected, which in turn, I think, showed how we could govern in a way that met the realities of the late 20th century and ultimately the 21st century. He carved out that path for so many of us. And I know why it's so fitting that the home of our United Nations—United States Mission to the United Nations is named in his honor.

Obviously, Ron wasn't a diplomat in the traditional sense. He never held the rank of Ambassador. He never forged a peace accord between warring factions, unless you include the 1988 Democratic convention. [*Laughter*] We're here not because of the titles that he held, but because of the life he led. Because Ron Brown embodied the values and the ideals, that sense of possibility, that is at the heart of the American story.

His was a quintessentially American story: growing up in Harlem, serving his country in uniform, working his way through law school, and then just breaking down every barrier that

he came across. He lived that American creed that if you work hard enough, if you're willing to put your shoulders to the wheel, there is nothing you cannot do.

As President Clinton mentioned, he never forgot where he came from. No matter how successful he became, he was there: counseling kids on the street, giving them hope; fighting for workers and minority businesses to make sure that they had the same chances that he had had; mentoring the next generation—so many of you—imparting not only wisdom, but the inspiration of his example. "The American Dream," he always believed, "rightfully belongs to every child in this Nation."

Ron Brown brought people together across race and cultures, various stations in life, an ability that no doubt came from deep within him. He was at once proud of his race—he never shied away from it—but he transcended his race at the same time. It was said that some Republican business executives, when they went out on a trade mission, every once in a while they'd look over and say, that was Jesse Jackson's campaign manager. And yet here I am, and I like this guy, and he knows my business, and he is helping me succeed.

And in that way, not only was he serving them, but he was also serving the country. Because that understanding that he was fostering on those trade missions, they'd bring that back home and make it easier for people to work together in other contexts. That was the lesson of his life: that despite all the differences that we supposedly are divided by, at the end, we're bound by what we have in common, as Americans and as human beings.

And Ron Brown understood America's unique role in the world. He had that blend of idealism and realism which recognizes that when we advance the prosperity of others, we advance our interests. The scope of our influence, the values that we care so deeply about, they ripple around the world. And that's good for us.

That's why he invested so much time and energy in Africa. It's why he argued that economic progress and human rights can't be separated. That's why he called commerce and economic development the "infrastructure of democracy." That's why he was on that flight to the Balkans, because, he said, just as America "took the lead in the peace process, we need to show the way in rebuilding from the ruins of war."

We need to show the way. That was what Ron Brown did. And that's what America and our tireless diplomats do every single day, around the world and here at the United Nations. And so on an occasion such as this, we don't just dedicate a building, we also rededicate ourselves to the principles that guide us, as a sovereign nation, but also as a member of the international community.

We believe, as we declared in the charter of this institution, "in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth" of all people and "in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small." And so as united nations, we address the conditions that make the world more just and conflict less likely: caring for children, tending to the sick, keeping the peace in places that are wracked by conflict, speaking out for the rights and dignity of every human being.

We believe that just as every sovereign nation has rights, that they also have fundamental responsibilities. Governments exist not simply to perpetuate themselves, their own rule, but to fulfill the aspirations of their people. And history teaches us that nations are more secure and the world is more peaceful when nations meet these responsibilities to uphold human rights, to resolve differences peacefully, when we advance our interests together.

We believe that when nations fail to meet these basic obligations, when peace is threatened or international law is undermined, that we cannot stand idly by. The words of the charter must have meaning. The writ of the international community must have credibility. Violations of these core principles must have consequences.

Because what we've learned from bitter experience, from the wars that were not prevented, the innocent lives that were not saved, is that all that's necessary for evil to triumph is that good people and responsible nations stand

by and do nothing. There are times, as when President Clinton showed extraordinary leadership in the Balkans, and moments such as now in the situation in Libya, where our conscience and our common interests compel us to act.

We believe that force should not be the first option. We understand the costs and risks involved in the use of force. So whenever possible, we turn to alternatives that might change behavior: condemnation that puts violators on notice, sanctions that increase pressure, embargoes that block arms to aggressors, and accountability for those who commit crimes. And should those prove insufficient, we have to be prepared to take the necessary measures to uphold international peace and security and protect innocent people. That's what we're doing in Libya, in large part because of the extraordinary work of some people in this room.

And finally, we believe that the world is more secure and the interests of the United States are best advanced, when we act collectively. As I said last night, the burden of action should not always be America's alone. So in Libya today we see a broad and growing coalition, including Arab partners. And I had to apologize to President Clinton before he walked out because he never sees his wife. [*Laughter*] But the extraordinary work she's doing in London today, the extraordinary work that she's done over the past several months, is part of that core understanding that when we act together, it's a force multiplier.

Today we see the NATO alliance in command of the arms embargo, the no-fly zone; starting tomorrow, the mission to protect the Libyan people. We see the United Nations and many international organizations providing the assistance that's needed to people who've been harmed by Qadhafi over the last several weeks. Today in London, we're seeing more than 30 nations and the Libyan opposition come together to support a transition to a future that better serves the Libyan people.

That's how the international community should work: more nations—the United States right there at the center of it, but not alone—everybody stepping up, bearing their responsibilities, carrying the costs of upholding peace and security. That's what it means to be united nations. That was the vision imagined by the founders of this institution.

"In our disillusionment after the last war," Franklin Roosevelt said, "we gave up the hope of gradually achieving a better peace because we had not the courage to fulfill our responsibilities in an admittedly imperfect world." And over the past six decades, there have been times where this imperfect institution and its members did not find the courage to fulfill our responsibilities. And we are forever haunted by that. We have seen the consequences of that in atrocities that might have been prevented.

And yet today in Libya, we are showing what's possible when we find our courage, when we fulfill our responsibilities, and when we come together as an international community to defend our common interests and our common values. We're saving innocent lives. We're making it clear that the United States of America and the world stand with those who seek to determine their own destiny, free from fear, and free to dream of a day when they too can live in justice and dignity.

I think that's the essence of American leadership. That's what it means to lead. This is the purpose of the United Nations. And this will be the work of all who now labor in a building that bears the name of somebody who understood leadership, who lived a life of leadership, and that is Ronald H. Brown. We are grateful to him. And I cannot think of a better way to honor the extraordinary work that he has done and the influence that he continues to carry in all of our lives.

So with that, I would like to invite Alma, Michael, and Tracey to join me for the presentation.

[*At this point, the President presented the Brown family with a commemorative flag and plaque.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:19 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Alma Brown, wife, Michael A. Brown, son, and Tracey Brown James, daughter, of Ronald H. Brown; former Mayor David N. Dinkins of New York City; musician

Patti LaBelle; E. John Rice, Jr., brother of Ambassador Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations; civil rights activist Jesse L. Jackson; Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton; and Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City
March 29, 2011

Everybody, have a seat. Thank you. Thank you so much. You guys are applauding the cornbread—[*laughter*]—which is basically cake. So those of you who think that you're passing on dessert but are having two pieces of cornbread, I know those tricks. [*Laughter*]

Look, it's wonderful to see all of you. I'm going to be coming from table to table, so I'm not going to give a long speech. The first thing I want to do—there has been some speculation about our DNC chair plunging back into the hurly-burly of electoral politics. I don't know if these rumors are true, but what I do know is that I cannot imagine somebody who has been a better partner to me and a better friend to me than our DNC chair, Tim Kaine.

And since he happened to be a really great Governor for the Commonwealth of Virginia, I suspect that, should he choose to do so, he would also be an outstanding Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia. But whatever decisions he makes, I just want everybody here to know that he has done an outstanding job for me and an outstanding job for the country. And so I could not be prouder of him.

The second thing I want to say is, obviously, we gather in this wonderful setting, in historic Harlem, on a day in which we're all thinking about our troops overseas and some very difficult challenges around the world. On one side of the world we've got one of our closest allies that's going through just an unbelievable catastrophe, and we are doing everything we can to help them. Then in the Middle East and North Africa we are seeing the kind of transformative moment that typically only comes once in a generation, and we are having to make sure that we help to bend history in a way that is good for the people there and ultimately good for the American people.

And so this is a challenging time. And I could not do what I do, which is get up every morning and make the best possible decisions that I can on behalf of the American people, if I didn't know that I had a lot of people out there rooting for me and a lot of friends supporting me. And each and every one of you in one way or another have been enormously supportive of our efforts.

And so, collectively, I want you all to know that I am very, very grateful for your friendship, grateful for your advice and good counsel, grateful for your prayers, and I want to let all of you know that I'm extraordinarily confident that as difficult as these days sometimes seem, that we're going to emerge on the other side of these moments and on the other side of my Presidency, being able to look back and say that we did right by our children and our grandchildren and we've made this country and the world more prosperous and more secure.

So thank you for the great work that you guys have done. And with that, let me join your tables. I will not be eating because I was sneaking a little something in the back. [*Laughter*] All right? But that also leaves me time to actually answer your questions. And hopefully, I'll be able to spend enough time—when you see somebody hovering over my shoulder that means I'm getting the hook. We're only a few blocks away from the Apollo so—they won't actually have a literal hook—[*laughter*]—I won't get gonged or anything. But that does mean I've got to move over to the next table.

So thank you very much, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:52 p.m. at the Red Rooster Restaurant.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City
March 29, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody. Hello, New York. Hello, Harlem. It is good to be here tonight. Hey, you, how did you get up there so high? [*Laughter*] She——

I've got some acknowledgements I need to make. Everybody here is important, but there are a few people I want to mention.

First of all, we are in the district of somebody who helped us to deliver on a historic legislative session over the last couple of years and has been a leader here for a very long time—he doesn't like to remember how long it's been—but Congressman Charlie Rangel is in the house.

We've got your outstanding attorney general; Eric Schneiderman is here. The former mayor of New York City, David Dinkins, is in the house. Several of Harlem's outstanding leaders: a great friend and one of my earliest supporters here in New York City, Senator Bill Perkins is in the house; Assemblyman Keith Wright is here; Councilwoman Inez Dickens is here.

And finally, I just want to say how thankful I am for our Democratic National Committee chairman. I think some people obviously have seen Tim Kaine on television and know that he was a Governor of the great Commonwealth of Virginia. What some of you may not know is Tim was the first person, the first elected official outside of the State of Illinois, to endorse my candidacy for President.

He made that announcement as Governor of Virginia, in Richmond, former seat of the Confederacy. And this is back in February of 2007, when most people could not pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] And there was not a big political upside to endorsing me at that point. But he decided to do it because he thought it was the right thing to do and because we shared a set of values about why to get into public service and who we were fighting for and the kind of America we were fighting for.

And I say all this because there have been some rumors swirling around that Tim might decide to plunge back into electoral politics. And if he does, I want even people up here to be paying attention and to be rooting for him because he is not just a leader for Virginia, he is a leader for America. And I'm very thankful to him. Thank you, Tim.

Now, we meet here tonight, after as challenging a 2 years as America has gone through in our lifetimes. And when we started this journey 3 or 4 years ago, we understood that America was at a turning point. We understood that the wheels of history were churning and that the old ways of doing business couldn't help us to get to where America needed to be. It couldn't make us more competitive. It couldn't make us more energy independent. It couldn't ensure that our kids were learning and able not only to go to college, but also advance in careers.

We knew that how we approached international policy—trying to stand on our own without thinking about how we could mobilize the international community as a force multiplier—that that was not going to work given the incredible number of challenges that we faced. And most of all, I guess, we understood that unless we changed our politics, unless we changed how we did business, that the same problems that we had been talking about decade after decade would perpetuate themselves; that we had to undergo a transformation in how we thought about citizenship and how we thought about each other; and that we had to get beyond some of the old divisions that were holding us back as a people.

And so what our campaign tried to do was to resuscitate that notion that there's something fundamental that binds us together, despite all our differences. You look out on the room today, we've got people from every possible walk of life. And that's part of what makes New York City such an incredible place. And so what we wanted to do was adapt to the times, adapt to the 21st century, but also remind ourselves that there are some old-fashioned, timeworn values that, whether your forebears landed at Ellis Island or they came here on a slave ship

or they crossed the Rio Grande or however they got here, they typically had a commitment to hard work and a commitment to community and a commitment to family and a willingness to dream big dreams and a patriotism that was not rooted in ethnicity, but was rooted in a creed and a set of ideals and a belief that in America anything was possible. That's what brought us together as a campaign.

And what we then tried to do is to translate, in concrete terms, what would that mean in terms of policy. Well, it would mean that we were educating our kids not just to be outstanding workers and outstanding entrepreneurs, but also outstanding citizens. It meant that we had to make sure that we had an energy policy that not only protected the planet, but also ensured our long-term security because it ratcheted down our dependence on foreign oil. It meant that we finally had, in a nation as wealthy as ours, a health care system that was rational and smart and did not leave millions of people uninsured or at risk of bankruptcy just because a family member got sick.

We had to make sure that the ideals of equality and justice had real meaning and that we didn't just stand pat on the progress that we had made during my lifetime, but in fact, we kept on making progress so that 50 years from now people would look back and they'd say, this is a more just and a more equal place for everybody. [*Applause*] It's exciting, isn't it? [*Laughter*]

So here's the deal, people. We haven't finished our task. We've still got some work to do.

There have been times where we had to make some really tough decisions, really unpopular decisions, digging ourselves out of this incredible economic hole that we were in. We had to stabilize the financial system. That wasn't always popular. We had to save the U.S. auto industry, and everybody said that wasn't going to work. And I just want to report that GM just announced it's hiring every single one of the workers that they'd laid off before we took office.

But when you look back on the track record of accomplishments over the last 2 years, I think you can go down that list of commitments we made to each other—not just commitments I made, but commitments we made to each other about the kind of country we want to be—and I think we've got some things that we can be proud of.

We passed health care reform, and it is going to make life better for millions of Americans. We pulled this economy out of the ditch, and just in this last year alone, over a million and a half jobs have been created, and we're going to keep on creating more. We made sure that we finally got rid of that archaic policy, "don't ask, don't tell," because we wanted to make sure that every American who wants to serve can serve.

We raised fuel efficiency standards on cars and invested in record amounts in clean energy, because we want to make sure that wind energy and solar panels and all the incredible promise of a new energy future starts right here in the United States of America.

So we can go down the list domestically, and then we can talk internationally. Obviously, that's been on a lot of our minds lately. And we are grateful to our men and women in uniform who have implemented so many difficult policies under such incredibly difficult conditions. And whether it's helping the people of Haiti or it's helping the people of Japan, whether it is being on the right side of history in the Middle East and North Africa or making sure that innocents who are seeking their freedom aren't slaughtered by tyranny, what we've been able to do is to once again form the kind of American leadership that brings people together, as opposed to drives them apart, and that renews old alliances and creates new coalitions.

So we've gotten a lot of stuff done. But right now what's on my mind is what hasn't gotten done yet. We're going to have to fix a broken immigration system, and that not—that is not yet complete. And we've got to make sure that, even as we're securing our borders, we also recognize that we are a nation of immigrants and that we want everybody to be able to partake in the American Dream.

We've got to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. I mean, New York looks pretty good, but we've got a lot of work to do on bridges and

sewer systems, but also on the new infrastructure of a new age, making sure that we've got the best broadband systems and the best wireless systems and the smart grids and the high-speed rails that will help move people and goods and services and information all throughout this great country of ours.

We still have a lot of work to do on energy. You know, tomorrow I'm going to give an energy speech. The last time gas prices were this high was in 2008 when I was running. And you remember what was going on right back then. The other side kept on talking about "drill, baby, drill." That was the slogan.

What we were talking about was breaking the pattern of being shocked at high prices and then, as prices go down, being lulled into a trance, but instead, let's actually have a plan. Let's, yes, increase domestic oil production, but let's also invest in solar and wind and geothermal and biofuels, and let's make our buildings more efficient and our cars more efficient. Not all of that work is done yet, but I'm not finished yet. We've got more work to do.

We're going to have to work to get our deficit under control. I inherited a big debt and a big deficit. And regardless of how we assign fault, all of us are responsible to work together to try to make sure that we can actually, in good conscience, be able to tell our children and our grandchildren we didn't leave a mountain of debt to them.

And that's going to require some hard choices, and it's going to require us not just telling the American people what they want to hear, but telling them what they need to hear. And I think the American people are ready for that, but it's not going to be easy. And if we're serious about winning the future, then all of us are going to have to recognize that we've got to have a government that lives within its means, that's investing in the things that we have to invest in to win the future, which means that we're going to have to cut out some things that we don't need, even if they're nice to have.

So if you go down this list and you say, not bad for 2 years work, the one thing that I want everybody here to understand is that I am as hopeful, if not more hopeful, now than I was when I was running.

You know, I did a bunch of network interviews today to talk about what we're doing in Libya and why what happens in the Middle East is so important to us and why those images coming from Tahrir Square in Egypt speak directly to who we are as a people and that ultimately our long-term security will be because a new generation of leadership in that region recognizes we aspire for them to have opportunity and to be successful.

And Diane Sawyer, I think it was, she started listing out, well, let's see, two wars that you've dealt with, a couple of earthquakes, nuclear situation in Japan, H1N1 virus, worst recession since the Great Depression. "No wonder you look old," she said. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. You look great! [*Laughter*]

The President. No, she actually did not say, "No wonder you look old." [*Laughter*] But I do appreciate you saying that I look great. [*Laughter*] I need encouragement too once in a while. [*Laughter*]

But no, what she said was, well, you know what, how do you kind of—when you get up in the morning, how do you stay focused and motivated? Don't you want to just pull the covers over your head sometimes?

And what I said was that after 2½ years in this job, or close to 2½ years, the thing that continually keeps me going is my complete confidence in the American people.

You know, they—there's a lot of talk about how divided America is and how frustrated and angry, and in some cases, people make arguments that especially the next generation, somehow they're apathetic or they're not involved. I don't see that. I mean, what I see are people who every day are doing the right thing by their families, by their communities. They're getting up, they're going to work, or they're out there pounding the pavement looking for work. They're managing budgets under incredible strain, but they're doing so with grace and good humor.

I see people who, day in and day out, are making sure that—we got some——

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.*]

The President. Do we have somebody here to just—we don't need—we've got—somebody is always following me around, so they'll be fine. It's just, next time you guys come, make sure to eat or drink ahead of time.

But what I see in the American people is just a core goodness and a core decency that expresses itself in so many different ways each and every day. But that spirit, it's got to be expressed not just in the workplace, not just on the Little League field or in church or a synagogue or a mosque. It also has to be expressed in our politics.

And so the biggest thing that we haven't gotten done and the thing that I'm going to ask all of you to be part of over the next couple of years, we still have a big job to do in transforming our politics, to make sure that we can have robust debate and real policy differences, but we never forget that what binds us together is always stronger than what drives us apart and that for all the differences in race and region and ethnicity and background, we are all Americans, and we believe in a set of fundamental principles, truths that we hold self-evident. That is going to be as much of the unfinished business that we focus on over the next couple years as anything that we do. And having friends like you who are here and ready to commit to that vision, that too makes me extraordinarily confident.

So thank you so much, everybody. I love you. Let's go to work. Yes, we can.

Audience members. Yes, we can!

The President. Yes, we can. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:51 p.m. at the Studio Museum in Harlem. In his remarks, he referred to Diane Sawyer, anchor, ABC's "World News With Diane Sawyer" program.

Remarks at Georgetown University
March 30, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Everybody, please have a seat. Please have a seat. It is wonderful to be back at Georgetown.

We've got a number of acknowledgements. First of all, I just want to thank President DeGioia for his outstanding leadership here, but also for his hospitality.

We also have here Secretary Steven Chu, my Energy Secretary. Where is Steven? There he is over there; Secretary Ken Salazar of the Interior Department; Secretary Tom Vilsack, our Agriculture Secretary; Ray LaHood, our Transportation Secretary; Lisa Jackson, our EPA Administrator; Nancy Sutley, who is our Council on Environmental Quality director, right here.

A couple of great Members of Congress: Congressman Jay Inslee of Washington; where's Jay? There he is over there. And Rush Holt of New Jersey is here. We've got—he didn't bring the weather with him—but the mayor of Los Angeles, Antonio Villaraigosa, is in the house. Mayor Scott Smith of Mesa, Arizona, is here.

And most importantly, the students of Georgetown University are in the house.

I want to start with a difficult subject: The Hoyas had a tough loss, Coach. [*Laughter*] Coach is here too, and I love Coach Thompson. I love his dad and the great tradition that they've had. And it turned out VCU was pretty good. [*Laughter*] I had Georgetown winning that game in my bracket, so we're all hurting here. [*Laughter*] But that's what next year is for.

We meet here at a tumultuous time for the world. In a matter of months, we've seen regimes toppled. We've seen democracy take root in North Africa and in the Middle East. We've witnessed a terrible earthquake, a catastrophic tsunami, a nuclear emergency that has battered one of our strongest allies and closest friends and the world's third largest economy. We've led an international effort in Libya to prevent a massacre and maintain stability throughout the broader region.

And as Americans, we're heartbroken by the lives that have been lost as a result of these events. We're deeply moved by the thirst for freedom in so many nations, and we're moved by the strength and the perseverance of the Japanese people. And it's natural, I think, to feel anxious about what all of this means for us.

And one big area of concern has been the cost and security of our energy. Obviously, the situation in the Middle East implicates our energy security. The situation in Japan leads us to ask questions about our energy sources.

In an economy that relies so heavily on oil, rising prices at the pump affects everybody, workers, farmers, truck drivers, restaurant owners, students who are lucky enough to have a car. [*Laughter*] Businesses see rising prices at the pump hurt their bottom line. Families feel the pinch when they fill up their tank. And for Americans that are already struggling to get by, a hike in gas prices really makes their lives that much harder. It hurts.

If you're somebody who works in a relatively low-wage job and you've got to commute to work, it takes up a big chunk of your income. You may not be able to buy as many groceries. You may have to cut back on medicines in order to fill up the gas tank. So this is something that everybody is affected by.

Now, here's the thing. We have been down this road before. Remember, it was just 3 years ago that gas prices topped $4 a gallon. I remember because I was in the middle of a Presidential campaign. Working folks certainly remember because it hit a lot of people pretty hard. And because we were at the height of political season, you had all kinds of slogans and gimmicks and outraged politicians; they were waving their three-point plans for 2-dollar-a-gallon gas. You remember that—"drill, baby, drill"—and we were going through all that. [*Laughter*] And none of it was really going to do anything to solve the problem. There was a lot of hue and cry, a lot of fulminating and hand-wringing, but nothing actually happened. Imagine that in Washington. [*Laughter*]

The truth is, none of these gimmicks, none of these slogans made a bit of difference. When gas prices finally did fall, it was mostly because the global recession had led to less demand for oil. Companies were producing less, the demand for petroleum went down, prices went down. Now that the economy is recovering, demand is back up. Add the turmoil in the Middle East, and it's not surprising that oil prices are higher. And every time the price of a barrel of oil on the world market rises by $10, a gallon of gas goes up by about 25 cents.

The point is, the ups and downs in gas prices historically have tended to be temporary. But when you look at the long-term trends, there are going to be more ups in gas prices than downs in gas prices. And that's because you've got countries like India and China that are growing at a rapid clip, and as 2 billion more people start consuming more goods—they want cars just like we've got cars; they want to use energy to make their lives a little easier just like we've got—it is absolutely certain that demand will go up a lot faster than supply. It's just a fact.

So here's the bottom line: There are no quick fixes. Anybody who tells you otherwise isn't telling you the truth. And we will keep on being a victim to shifts in the oil market until we finally get serious about a long-term policy for a secure, affordable energy future.

We're going to have to think long term, which is why I came here, to talk to young people here at Georgetown, because you have more of a stake in us getting our energy policy right than just about anybody.

Now, here's a source of concern, though. We've known about the dangers of our oil dependence for decades. Richard Nixon talked about freeing ourselves from dependence on foreign oil. And every President since that time has talked about freeing ourselves from dependence on foreign oil. Politicians of every stripe have promised energy independence, but that promise has so far gone unmet.

I talked about reducing America's dependence on oil when I was running for President, and I'm proud of the historic progress that we've made over the last 2 years towards that goal, and we'll talk about that a little bit. But I've got to be honest. We've run into the same

political gridlock, the same inertia, that has held us back for decades.

That has to change. That has to change. We cannot keep going from shock when gas prices go up to trance when they go back down. We go back to doing the same things we've been doing until the next time there's a price spike, and then we're shocked again. We can't rush to propose action when gas prices are high and then hit the snooze button when they fall again. We can't keep on doing that.

The United States of America cannot afford to bet our long-term prosperity, our long-term security on a resource that will eventually run out and even before it runs out will get more and more expensive to extract from the ground. We can't afford it when the costs to our economy, our country, and our planet are so high, not when your generation needs us to get this right. It's time to do what we can to secure our energy future.

And today I want to announce a new goal, one that is reasonable, one that is achievable, and one that is necessary. When I was elected to this office, America imported 11 million barrels of oil a day. By a little more than a decade from now, we will have cut that by one-third. That is something that we can achieve. We can cut our oil dependence by a third.

I set this goal knowing that we're still going to have to import some oil. It will remain an important part of our energy portfolio for quite some time, until we've gotten alternative energy strategies fully in force. And when it comes to the oil we import from other nations, obviously, we've got to look at neighbors like Canada and Mexico that are stable and steady and reliable sources. We also have to look at other countries like Brazil. Part of the reason I went down there is to talk about energy with the Brazilians. They recently discovered significant new oil reserves, and we can share American technology and know-how with them as they develop these resources.

But our best opportunities to enhance our energy security can be found in our own backyard, because we boast one critical, renewable resource that the rest of the world can't match: American ingenuity—American ingenuity, American know-how.

To make ourselves more secure, to control our energy future, we're going to have to harness all of that ingenuity. It's a task we won't be finished with by the end of my Presidency or even by the end of the next Presidency. But if we continue the work that we've already begun over the last 2 years, we won't just spark new jobs, industries, and innovations, we will leave your generation and future generations with a country that is safer, that is healthier, and that's more prosperous.

So today my administration is releasing a blueprint for a secure energy future that outlines a comprehensive national energy policy, one that we've been pursuing since the day I took office. And cutting our oil dependence by a third is part of that plan. Here at Georgetown, I'd like to talk in broad strokes about how we can achieve these goals.

Now, meeting the goal of cutting our oil dependence depends largely on two things: first, finding and producing more oil at home; second, reducing our overall dependence on oil with cleaner alternative fuels and greater efficiency.

This begins by continuing to increase America's oil supply. Even for those of you who are interested in seeing a reduction in our dependence on fossil fuels—and I know how passionate young people are about issues like climate change—the fact of the matter is, is that for quite some time, America is going to be still dependent on oil in making its economy work.

Now, last year, American oil production reached its highest level since 2003. And for the first time in more than a decade, oil we imported accounted for less than half of the liquid fuel we consumed. So that was a good trend. To keep reducing that reliance on imports, my administration is encouraging offshore oil exploration and production, as long as it's safe and responsible.

I don't think anybody here has forgotten what happened last year, where we had to deal

with the largest oil spill in [our]* history. I know some of the fishermen down in the Gulf Coast haven't forgotten it. And what we learned from that disaster helped us put in place smarter standards of safety and responsibility. For example, if you're going to drill in deep water, you've got to prove, before you start drilling, that you can actually contain an underwater spill. That's just common sense. And lately, we've been hearing folks saying, well, the Obama administration, they put restrictions on how oil companies operate offshore. Well, yes, because we just spent all that time, energy, and money trying to clean up a big mess. And I don't know about you, but I don't have amnesia. I remember these things. [*Laughter*] And I think it was important for us to make sure that we prevent something like that from happening again.

Now, today, we're working to expedite new drilling permits for companies that meet these higher standards. Since they were put in, we've approved 39 new shallow-water permits; we've approved seven deepwater permits in recent weeks. When it comes to drilling offshore, my administration approved more than two permits last year for every new well that the industry started to drill. So any claim that my administration is responsible for gas prices because we've, quote, unquote, "shut down" oil production, any claim like that is simply untrue. It might make for a useful sound bite, but it doesn't track with reality.

What is true is we've said, if you're going to drill offshore you've got to have a plan to make sure that we don't have the kind of catastrophe that we had last year. And I don't think that there's anybody who should dispute that that's the right strategy to pursue.

Moreover, we're actually pushing the oil industry to take advantage of the opportunities that they've already got. Right now the industry holds tens of millions of acres of leases where they're not producing a single drop. They're just sitting on supplies of American energy that are ready to be tapped. And that's why part of our plan is to provide new and better incentives that promote rapid, responsible development of these resources.

And we're also exploring and assessing new frontiers for oil and gas development from Alaska to the mid- and South Atlantic States, because producing more oil in America can help lower oil prices, can help create jobs, and can enhance our energy security, but we've got to do it in the right way.

Now, even if we increase domestic oil production, that is not going to be the long-term solution to our energy challenge. I give out this statistic all the time, and forgive me for repeating it again: America holds about 2 percent of the world's proven oil reserves. What that means is, is that even if we drilled every drop of oil out of every single one of the reserves that we possess, offshore and onshore, it still wouldn't be enough to meet our long-term needs. We consume about 25 percent of the world's oil. We only have 2 percent of the reserves. Even if we doubled U.S. oil production, we're still really short.

So the only way for America's energy supply to be truly secure is by permanently reducing our dependence on oil. We're going to have to find ways to boost our efficiency so we use less oil. We've got to discover and produce cleaner, renewable sources of energy that also produce less carbon pollution, which is threatening our climate. And we've got to do it quickly.

Now, in terms of new sources of energy, we have a few different options. The first is natural gas. Recent innovations have given us the opportunity to tap large reserves—perhaps a century's worth of reserves, a hundred years' worth of reserves—in the shale under our feet. But just as is true in terms of us extracting oil from the ground, we've got to make sure that we're extracting natural gas safely, without polluting our water supply.

That's why I've asked Secretary Chu, my Energy Secretary, to work with other agencies, the natural gas industry, States, and environmental experts to improve the safety of this process. And Chu is the right guy to do this. He's got a Nobel Prize in physics. He actually deserved his Nobel Prize. [*Laughter*] And this is the kind of thing that he likes to do for fun

* White House correction.

on the weekend. [*Laughter*] He goes into his garage, and he tinkers around and figures out how to extract natural gas. [*Laughter*]

No, I'm going to embarrass him further. [*Laughter*] Last year, when we were trying to fill—figure out how to close the cap, I sent Chu down to sit in the BP offices, and he essentially designed the cap that ultimately worked, and he drew up the specs for it and had BP build it, construct it. So this is somebody who knows what he's doing. So for those of you who are studying physics, it may actually pay off someday. [*Laughter*]

But the potential for natural gas is enormous. And this is an area where there's actually been some broad bipartisan agreement. Last year, more than 150 Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle produced legislation providing incentives to use clean-burning natural gas in our vehicles instead of oil. And that's a big deal. Getting 150 Members of Congress to agree on anything is a big deal. And they were even joined by T. Boone Pickens, a businessman who made his fortune on oil, but who is out there making the simple point that we can't simply drill our way out of our energy problems.

So I ask Members of Congress and all the interested parties involved to keep at it, pass a bill that helps us achieve the goal of extracting natural gas in a safe, environmentally sound way.

Now, another substitute for oil that holds tremendous promise is renewable biofuels, not just ethanol, but biofuels made from things like switch grass and wood chips and biomass.

If anybody doubts the potential of these fuels, consider Brazil. As I said, I was just there last week. Half of Brazil's vehicles can run on biofuels. Half of their fleet of automobiles can run on biofuels instead of petroleum. Just last week, our Air Force—our own Air Force—used an advanced biofuel blend to fly a Raptor 22—an F–22 Raptor faster than the speed of sound. Think about that. I mean, if an F–22 Raptor can fly at the speed of—faster than the speed of sound on biomass, then I know the old beater that you've got, that you're driving around in—[*laughter*]—can probably do so too. There's no reason why we can't have our cars do the same.

In fact, the Air Force is aiming to get half of its domestic jet fuel from alternative sources by 2016. And I'm directing the Navy and the Department of Energy and Agriculture to work with the private sector to create advanced biofuels that can power not just fighter jets, but also trucks and commercial airliners.

So there's no reason we shouldn't be using these renewable fuels throughout America. And that's why we're investing in things like fueling stations and research into the next generation of biofuels. One of the biggest problems we have with alternative energy is not just producing the energy, but also distributing it. We've got gas stations all around the country, so whenever you need gas you know you can fill up. It doesn't matter where you are. Well, we've got to have that same kind of distribution network when it comes to our renewable energy sources so that when you are converting to a different kind of car that runs on a different kind of energy, you're going to be able to have that same convenience. Otherwise, the market won't work; it won't grow.

Over the next 2 years, we'll help entrepreneurs break ground for four next-generation biorefineries, each with a capacity of more than 20 million gallons per year. And going forward, we should look for ways to reform biofuels incentives to make sure that they're meeting today's challenges and that they're also saving taxpayers money.

So as we replace oil with fuels like natural gas and biofuels, we can also reduce our dependence by making cars and trucks that use less oil in the first place. Seventy percent of our petroleum consumption goes to transportation—70 percent. And by the way, so does the second biggest chunk of most families' budgets, goes into transportation. And that's why one of the best ways to make our economy less dependent on oil and save folks more money is to make our transportation sector more efficient.

Now, we went through 30 years where we didn't raise fuel efficiency standards on cars. And part of what happened in the U.S. auto in-

dustry was because oil appeared relatively cheap, the U.S. auto industry decided we're just going to make our money on SUVs and we're not going to worry about fuel efficiency. Thirty years of lost time when it comes to technology that could improve the efficiency of cars.

So last year, we established a groundbreaking national fuel efficiency standard for cars and trucks. We did this last year without legislation. We just got all the parties together, and we got them to agree: automakers, autoworkers, environmental groups, industry.

So that means our cars will be getting better gas mileage, saving 1.8 billion barrels of oil over the life of the program—1.8 billion. Our consumers will save money from fewer trips to the pump: $3,000, on average, over time you will save because of these higher fuel efficiency standards. And our automakers will build more innovative products. Right now there are even cars rolling off the assembly lines in Detroit with combustion engines. I'm not talking about hybrids—combustion engines that get more than 50 miles per gallon. So we know how to do it. We know how to make our cars more efficient.

But going forward, we're going to continue to work with the automakers, with the autoworkers, with States, to ensure the high-quality, fuel-efficient cars and trucks of tomorrow are built right here in the United States of America. That's going to be a top priority for us.

This summer, we're going to propose the first-ever fuel efficiency standards for heavy-duty trucks. And this fall, we'll announce the next round of fuel standards for cars that builds on what we've already done.

And by the way, the Federal Government is going to need to lead by example. The fleet of cars and trucks we use in the Federal Government is one of the largest in the country. We've got a lot of cars. And that's why we've already doubled the number of alternative vehicles in the Federal fleet. And that's why today I am directing agencies to purchase 100 percent alternative fuel, hybrid, or electric vehicles by 2015. All of them should be alternative fuel.

Going forward, we'll partner with private companies that want to upgrade their large fleets. And this means, by the way, that you students, as consumers or future consumers of cars, you've got to make sure that you are boosting demand for alternative vehicles. You're going to have a responsibility as well, because if alternative-fuel vehicles are manufactured, but you guys aren't buying them, then folks will keep on making cars that don't have the same fuel efficiency. So you've got power in this process, and the decisions you make individually in your lives will say something about how serious we are when it comes to energy independence.

We've also made historic investments in high-speed rail and mass transit, because part of making our transportation sector cleaner and more efficient involves offering all Americans, whether they are urban, suburban, or rural, the choice to be mobile without having to get in a car and pay for gas.

Still, there are few breakthroughs as promising for increasing fuel efficiency and reducing our dependence on oil as electric vehicles. Soon after I took office, I set a goal of having one million electric vehicles on our roads by 2015. We've created incentives for American companies to develop these vehicles and for Americans who want them to buy them.

So new manufacturing plants are opening over the next few years. And a modest $2 billion investment in competitive grants for companies to develop the next generation of batteries for these cars has jump-started a big new American industry. Pretty soon, America will be home to 40 percent of global manufacturing capacity for these advanced batteries.

And for those of you who are wondering what that means, the thing that's been holding back electric vehicles is the battery that stores that electricity, that energy. And the more efficient, the more lightweight we can make those batteries, the easier it is to manufacture those cars at a competitive price.

And if we can have that industry here in the United States of America, that means jobs. If those batteries are made here, the cars are made here. Those cars are made here, we're putting Americans back to work.

Now, to make sure we stay on this goal, we're going to need to do more by offering more powerful incentives to consumers and by rewarding the communities that pave the way for the adoption of these vehicles.

Now, one other thing about electric cars—and you don't need to talk to Chu about this—it turns out electric cars run on electricity. [*Laughter*] And so even if we reduce our oil dependency and we're producing all these great electric cars, we're going to have to have a plan to change the way we generate electricity in America so that it's cleaner and safer and healthier. We know that ushering in a clean energy economy has the potential of creating untold numbers of new jobs and new businesses right here in the United States. But we're going to have to think about how do we produce electricity more efficiently.

Now, in addition to producing it, we actually also have to think about making sure we're not wasting energy. Now, I don't know how we're doing on the Georgetown campus, Mr. President, but every institution and every household has to start thinking about how are we reducing the amount of energy that we're using and doing it in more efficient ways.

Today, our homes and businesses consume 40 percent of the energy that we use, and it costs us billions of dollars in energy bills. Manufacturers that require large amounts of energy to make their products, they're challenged by rising energy costs. And so you can't separate the issue of oil dependence from the issue of how we are producing generally—more energy generally.

And that's why we've proposed new programs to help Americans upgrade their homes and businesses and plants with new, energy-efficient building materials—new lighting, new windows, new heating and cooling systems—investments that will save consumers and business owners tens of billions of dollars a year and free up money for investment and hiring and creating new jobs and hiring more workers and putting contractors to work as well.

The nice thing about energy efficiency is we already have the technology. We don't have to create something new. We just have to help businesses and homeowners put in place the installation, the energy-efficient windows, the energy-efficient lighting. They'll get their money back. You will save money on your electricity bill that pays for those improvements that you made, but a lot of people may not have the money up front, and so we've got to give them some incentives to do that.

And just like the fuels we use in our cars, we're going to have to find cleaner renewable sources of electricity. Today, about two-fifths of our electricity come from clean energy sources. But we can do better than that. I think that with the right incentives in place, we can double our use of clean energy. And that's why, in my State of the Union Address back in January, I called for a new clean energy standard for America. By 2035, 80 percent of our electricity needs to come from a wide range of clean energy sources, renewables like wind and solar, efficient natural gas. And yes, we're going to have to examine how do we make clean coal and nuclear power work.

Now, in light of the ongoing events in Japan, I want to just take a minute to talk about nuclear power. Right now America gets about one-fifth of our electricity from nuclear energy. And it's important to recognize that nuclear energy doesn't emit carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. So those of us who are concerned about climate change, we've got to recognize that nuclear power, if it's safe, can make a significant contribution to the climate change question.

And I'm determined to ensure that it's safe. So in light of what's happened in Japan, I've requested a comprehensive safety review by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to make sure that all of our existing nuclear energy facilities are safe. And we're going to incorporate those conclusions and lessons from Japan in design and the building of the next generation of plants. But we can't simply take it off the table.

My administration is leading global discussions towards a new international framework in which all countries who are operating nuclear plants are making sure that they're not spreading dangerous nuclear materials and technology.

But more broadly, a clean energy standard can expand the scope of clean energy investments because what it does is it gives cutting-edge companies the certainty that they need to invest. Essentially, what it does is it says to companies, you know what, you will have a customer if you're producing clean energy. Utilities, they need to buy a certain amount of clean energy in their overall portfolio, and that means that innovators are willing to make those big capital investments.

And we've got to start now because—think about this—in the 1980s, America was home to more than 80 percent of the world's wind capacity, 90 percent of the world's solar capacity. We were the leaders in wind. We were the leaders in solar. We owned the clean energy economy in the eighties. Guess what. Today, China has the most wind capacity. Germany has the most solar capacity. Both invest more in clean energy than we do, even though we are a larger economy and a substantially larger user of energy. We've fallen behind on what is going to be the key to our future.

Other countries are now exporting technology we pioneered, and they're going after the jobs that come with it because they know that the countries that lead the 21st-century clean energy economy will be the countries that lead the 21st-century global economy. I want America to be that nation. I want America to win the future.

So a clean energy standard will help drive private investment in innovation. But I want to make this point. Government funding will still be critical. Over the past 2 years, the historic investments my administration has made in clean and renewable energy research and technology have helped private sector companies grow and hire hundreds of thousands of new workers.

I've visited gleaming new solar arrays that are among the largest in the world. I've tested an electric vehicle fresh off the assembly line. I mean, I didn't really test it; I was able to drive, like, 5 feet before Secret Service said to stop. [*Laughter*] I've toured factories that used to be shuttered, where they're now building advanced wind blades that are as long as 747s, and they're building the towers that support them. And I've seen the scientists that are searching for the next big breakthrough in energy. None of this would have happened without Government support.

I understand we've got a tight fiscal situation, so it's fair to ask how do we pay for Government's investment in energy. And as we debate our national priorities and our budget in Congress, we're going to have to make some tough choices. We're going to have to cut what we don't need to invest in what we do need.

Unfortunately, some folks want to cut critical investments in clean energy. They want to cut our research and development into new technologies. They're shortchanging the resources necessary even to promptly issue new permits for offshore drilling. These cuts would eliminate thousands of private sector jobs. It would terminate scientists and engineers. It would end fellowships for researchers, some who may be here at Georgetown, graduate students, and other talent that we desperately need to get into this area in the 21st century. That doesn't make sense.

We're already paying a price for our inaction. Every time we fill up at the pump, every time we lose a job or a business to countries that are investing more than we do in clean energy, when it comes to our air, our water, and the climate change that threatens the planet that you will inherit, we're already paying a price. These are costs that we are already bearing. And if we do nothing, the price will only go up.

So at moments like these, sacrificing these investments in research and development, in supporting clean energy technologies, that would weaken our energy economy and make us more dependent on oil. That's not a game plan to win the future. That's a vision to keep us mired in the past. I will not accept that outcome for the United States of America. We are not going to do that.

Let me close by speaking directly to the students here, the next generation who are going to be writing the next great chapter in the American story. The issue of energy independence is one that America has been talking about since before your parents were your age,

since before you were born. And you also happen to go to a school [in a town]* that for a long time has suffered from a chronic unwillingness to come together and make tough choices. And so I forgive you for thinking that maybe there isn't much we can do to rise to this challenge. Maybe some of you are feeling kind of cynical or skeptical about whether we're actually going to solve this problem. But everything I have seen and experienced with your generation convinces me otherwise.

I think that precisely because you are coming of age at a time of such rapid and sometimes unsettling change, born into a world with fewer walls, educated in an era of constant information, tempered by war and economic turmoil, because that's the world in which you're coming of age, I think you believe as deeply as any of our previous generations that America can change and it can change for the better.

We need that. We need you to dream big. We need you to summon that same spirit of unbridled optimism and that bold willingness to tackle tough challenges and see those challenges through that led previous generations to rise to greatness: to save a democracy, to touch the Moon, to connect the world with our own science and our own imagination.

That's what America is capable of. That's what you have to push America to do, and it will be you that pushes it. That history of ours, of meeting challenges, that's your birthright. You understand that there's no problem out there that is not within our power to solve.

I don't want to leave this challenge for future Presidents. I don't want to leave it for my children. I don't want to leave it for your children. So yes, solving it will take time, and it will take effort. It will require our brightest scientists, our most creative companies. It will require all of us, Democrats, Republicans, and everybody in between, to do our part. But with confidence in America and in ourselves and in one another, I know this is a challenge that we will solve.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:36 a.m. in McDonough Memorial Gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to John J. DeGioia, president, John Thompson III, men's basketball head coach, and John Thompson, Jr., former men's basketball head coach, Georgetown University; and T. Boone Pickens, founder, BP Capital, L.P.

Statement on the Appointment of Princeton N. Lyman as United States Special Envoy to Sudan
March 31, 2011

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Ambassador Princeton N. Lyman as the new U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan. With a lifetime of experience working on some of Africa's most pressing challenges, Ambassador Lyman is uniquely qualified to sustain our efforts in support of a peaceful and prosperous future for the Sudanese people. I also want to thank my friend Scott Gration for his tireless and effective work as my previous Special Envoy. As the State Department's senior adviser on Sudan north-south negotiations since last August, Ambassador Lyman worked closely with General Gration as part of the American diplomatic effort that led to an historic and peaceful independence referendum for South Sudan.

I was proud to nominate General Gration as our next Ambassador to Kenya, and I am grateful that Ambassador Lyman has agreed to take on this new assignment and sustain the progress that has been made. In his new capacity, Ambassador Lyman will oversee our support for full implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, reduced tensions between north and south over the status of Abyei, the birth of an independent South Su-

* White House correction.

dan on July 9, 2011, and a definitive end to the conflict in Darfur. In those efforts, he has my full support and confidence.

Just as the United States depended on his diplomatic skills to help support the peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy when he was U.S. Ambassador to South Africa, I am confident that Ambassador Lyman's deep knowledge of the African Continent will advance U.S. interests and the aspirations of the Sudanese people during this time of transformative change in Sudan.

Remarks at a UPS Customer Center in Landover, Maryland
April 1, 2011

Thank you. Hello, everybody. Thank you so much. Everybody, please have a seat.

I am thrilled to be here, proud to be joined here today by two of our outstanding Cabinet Secretaries, Steven Chu and Ray LaHood. Where are Steven Chu and Ray? There they are over there. We're here today for a simple reason: Ray wasn't home when they tried to deliver a package yesterday—[*laughter*]—so we thought we'd just grab it and be on our way. [*Laughter*] I've been working him too hard.

In addition to Steve and Ray, we also have the attorney general of Maryland, Doug Gansler, is here. And we've got one of the finest Senators in the United States Senate, from Maryland, Ben Cardin is in the house.

We actually didn't come here for—to grab a package. We're actually here to announce an exciting new partnership between the Federal Government and some of America's leading companies, a partnership that will help reduce our dependence on oil, that will protect our planet, and will spur economic growth.

I gave a speech about this earlier this week, and I laid out a blueprint that will put America on a path toward a clean energy future. I know a lot of folks have been feeling the pinch of higher gas prices lately, whether you're filling up your tank or you're running a business like UPS. And usually, it's times like these when everybody starts saying we should do something about our dependence on oil. And when prices go back down, we forget about it and we move on until the next crisis hits.

The point I made earlier this week is that we can't keep on doing that. That's not how we should conduct our energy policy in this country. We can't go from shock to trance, rushing the proposed action when gas prices rise and then hitting the snooze button when they go back down. We've got to have a steady, sustained, smart strategy. And at a time when we're addressing instability overseas, we know this is a national security issue, and it's a huge economic issue.

Nearly 2 years after one of the worst recessions in our history—certainly the worst one in our lifetimes—our economy is showing signs of real strength. Today we learned that we added 230,000 private sector jobs last month, and that's good news. That means more packages. [*Laughter*] Right? That makes 1.8 million private sector jobs created in the last 13 months. And the unemployment rate has now fallen a full point in the last 4 months. And the last time that happened was during the recovery in 1984, where we saw such a significant drop in the unemployment rate.

Now, despite that good news, everybody here knows we've got a lot of more work to do. There are still millions of Americans out there that are looking for a job that pays the bills. I know there's a lot going on in the world right now, and so the news has been captured by the images of the Middle East and what's happening—the tragedy to our friends in Japan.

And I'm focused on those issues, but you should know that keeping the economy going and making sure jobs are available is the first thing I think about when I wake up in the morning and it's the last thing I think about when I go to bed each night. And I will not be satisfied until every American who wants a good job can find one and every American gets a shot at the American Dream. That's what we're focused on. That's what we're fighting for.

So although we got good news today, we have to keep the momentum going. And making the

transition to a clean energy economy will help us do that in two very important ways. First, it reduces the chance that our families, our businesses, and our economy will be held hostage to the whims of the oil market, will be held hostage to something that happens on the other side of the world. Second, investments in clean energy have the potential to create a whole—untold number of new jobs and new industries right here in the United States.

So for all these reasons, I set a new goal for America. When I was first elected to this office, America imported 11 million barrels of oil a day—11 million barrels. [By a little more than]* a decade from now, I want us to have cut that by one-third. That is achievable, it is necessary, it's good for our future, and we are going to get it done. I am confident we can get it done.

Now, to meet that goal, we're going to need to pursue a broad range of policies: new incentives for natural gas fleets, new research on advanced biofuels. And my hope is, is that members of both parties, Republicans and Democrats, will support these kinds of proposals. This shouldn't be a partisan issue, this is an American issue: making sure that we've got energy security and energy independence.

But one of the best ways to reduce our dependence on oil is by making our cars and trucks more energy efficient, because transportation accounts for more than 70 percent of America's oil consumption. And by the way, using energy-efficient cars and trucks can also make economic sense because transportation is one of the biggest costs for many businesses and certainly for many families. So energy-efficient cars and trucks won't just cut our dependence on oil, it can save us money day to day.

If we're serious about making the transition from gas guzzlers to hybrids, then we've got to show automakers and truck manufacturers that there's a real market for these incentives. They're not going to build them if they don't think anybody's going to buy them. We need to show them that if they manufacture fuel-efficient cars and trucks, people will buy them. We need to put our money where our mouth is.

And I'm proud to say that one group that's actually leading by example on this is the Federal Government. Right now the Government's fleet includes more than 600,000 vehicles, which means that we have the largest fleet in America. And that means we've got a lot of purchasing power. So what we're doing is we're using it to boost clean energy technologies. We've already doubled the number of Federal cars and trucks that are hybrids, and I'm directing our departments and our agencies to make sure a hundred percent of the vehicles they buy are fuel-efficient or clean energy cars and trucks by 2015. Not 50 percent, not 75 percent, a hundred percent of our vehicles.

So the Government can lead by example. That creates a market. That means they're manufacturing more of it. That means that unit cost may go down, which makes it cheaper for businesses and consumers.

But if we're going to upgrade all of America's fleets, then our businesses are going to need to step up as well. And that's why I am very proud of what companies like UPS, FedEx, AT&T, Verizon, and PepsiCo are doing. Along with Secretaries Chu and LaHood, I just had a chance to see some of these fuel-efficient cars and trucks that they're adding to their fleets, including hybrids and all-electric vehicles manufactured right here in the United States of America by Ford and GM—right here in the U.S. of A. And as owners of some of our Nation's largest private fleets, these companies are leading the way when it comes to building clean fleets, and we need to make sure all our businesses are following their example.

So that's why we're launching a National Clean Fleets Partnership. If you're a business that needs to transport goods, then I'm challenging you to replace your old fleet with a clean energy fleet that's not only good for your bottom line, but good for our economy, good for our country, good for our planet. And if you

* White House correction.

accept this challenge and you join our Clean Fleets Partnership, we're going to make a number of tools available, from technical assistance to cutting-edge research and development, that will help you make the transition to a clean energy fleet. And Chu and LaHood will also come and wash your car or truck. [*Laughter*] Wasn't that part of the deal? Absolutely. [*Laughter*] A little Armor All—it's going to look good. [*Laughter*]

Just to give you a sense of the kind of difference this partnership can make, every single year millions of commercial vehicles travel America's roads and highways, burning nearly 4 billion gallons of fuel along the way—4 billion gallons. With this partnership, we'll help make sure those vehicles are energy efficient so we can cut the amount of pollution they pump into the air, cut the amount of gasoline they need to fill a tank, cut the amounts of oil America imports from abroad.

Now, this Clean Fleets Partnership is just part of a broader effort that we've been making over the last couple years to promote fuel-efficient vehicles and build a clean energy economy. Last year, after going about 30 years without raising fuel efficiency standards, we finally put in place a national fuel efficiency standard for cars and trucks. And as a result, our cars will get better gas mileage, and ultimately they're expected to save 1.8 billion barrels of oil. Our consumers will save money from fewer trips to the pump. Our automakers will build more innovative cars and trucks. And later this year, as we finalize the first-ever fuel standards for heavy-duty trucks, we'll announce the next round of fuel standards for cars that builds on what we've done.

Now, beyond raising fuel standards for our cars and trucks, we're also working to build the next generation of vehicles. I mean, it was wonderful seeing some of these trucks and cars that were back here, and I was getting the input from folks about how we can advance the technologies. Soon after I took office, we set a goal of having 1 million electric vehicles on our roads by 2015, which would make the United States the first country in the world to reach that milestone. And to help meet that goal, we need a $7,500 tax rebate that's available directly at the dealership for those who want to buy electric vehicles. And we should launch a new program to reward communities that make it as easy as possible for families and businesses to use electric vehicles.

And one of the things that I heard repeatedly, and some of the folks who are already driving some of these cars will tell you that—or these trucks will tell you—and that is, making sure that we've got stations, charging stations if we're talking about electric vehicles, making sure that we've got fueling stations if we're talking about natural gas conversion. That's critical. And we don't have the distribution platforms right now. That's something that we've really got to work on.

Meanwhile, we're also investing in the advanced batteries that can power these electric vehicles, investments that are already making a difference. You know, a couple of years ago, America produced less than 2 percent of the world's advanced batteries. These are the batteries that go into these hybrids and these electric cars. We produced less than 2 percent of them. Over the last few years, we've made investments in a homegrown American advanced battery industry. And partly because of the investments that we've made, we're going to be able to produce 40 percent of the world's advanced batteries. So we've helped jump-start a big new industry right here in the United States of America, and that's a smart investment.

So that's the kind of partnership between business and Government that's always made our economy strong, and I think there's a lesson in that. It's not the role of Government to be the engine of innovation and prosperity in America. That's the job of entrepreneurs and executives and the outstanding workers of the companies that are represented here. You're the ones who are really making innovation happen. But Government does have the ability to spark innovation, to support the research, the scientific discovery that has always led to breakthroughs and new products. And it's in our national interest to make these investments.

For example, we were just talking about some of these trucks. There is still work to be

done to make the fueling faster, to bring down the price. And all of those things require some innovation and some new technologies so that in the end it's not only as cheap to run a truck like this or purchase a truck like this, but it's cheaper than a traditional engine. There's going to be more work to do on this, and historically, individual companies may not be able to make all those investments on their own. Government has to make those investments.

Now, this is tougher to do in light of the deficit that I inherited when I took office. We're all concerned about our debt. We're all concerned about our deficit. And that's why I've proposed some deep cuts in spending so we can live within our means and focus the—on the investments that are most likely to help grow our economy and create jobs: investments in education, investments in our infrastructure, investments in research and development, investments in clean energy technologies of the kind that I've talked about today. We've got to make those investments; otherwise, we're going to fall behind other countries. China's making those investments. Germany's making those investments. South Korea's making those investments. We can't afford to fall behind.

So the key issue here is, how do we pay for all this at a time when we've also got to shrink the deficit? Well, that means we've got to make some tough choices. We got to stop spending on things that we don't need to spend on things that we do. And right now there's a debate about all this going on in Washington as Congress puts together a budget for this year, and then we're going to have to put together a budget for next year.

So far, after a few weeks of negotiations between Democrats, Republicans, and my team at the White House, it appears that we're getting close to an agreement between the leaders of both parties on how much spending we should cut. There are still details and differences to work out. And what I've said is, neither Democrats or Republicans should get a hundred percent of what they want. They're going to have to compromise. They're going to have to figure this out.

Both sides are close, though, and we know that a compromise is within reach. And we also know that we can't afford not to have Congress work out these budgets and make sure that we're investing in the right things. If these budget negotiations break down, we could end up having to shut down the Government, just at a time when the economy is starting to recover.

That could jeopardize the economic recovery. It has an impact on everybody's bottom line. UPS, I know, delivers a lot of packages to the U.S. Government. You don't need a shutdown right now. Every business here could be impacted. We can't allow that to happen.

So given the encouraging news we received today on jobs, it would be the height of irresponsibility to halt our economic momentum because of the same old Washington politics. That's not what we need.

The American people, they don't want us to go to our respective corners and then just have the same battles we've been having for decades now. It can't be "my way or the highway." They want their leaders to come together. And right now I believe we have a real opportunity to do just that, in the same way that we did back in December when we cut taxes for the American people in a bipartisan way.

So it's time to agree on a budget that makes us live within our means, while still investing in our future. That's how these businesses operate, and that's why they're successful. Businesses have gone through tough times during this recession and had to make some cutbacks on things that weren't needed. But that made those companies stronger. The same can be true for America as a whole. That's how we're going to keep our economy growing. That's how we're going to put our people back to work. That's how we're going to keep the American Dream alive for the next generation.

And so I just want to say to all of you, thank you for the extraordinary work you've done. Thank you for your help. We got to get busy. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:33 p.m.

Statement on the Attack on a United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan Compound in Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan
April 1, 2011

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the attack on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan today. Together with the American people, I offer my deepest condolences to those injured and killed, as well as to their loved ones. The brave men and women of the United Nations, including the Afghan staff, undertake their work in support of the Afghan people. Their work is essential to building a stronger Afghanistan for the benefit of all its citizens. We stress the importance of calm and urge all parties to reject violence and resolve differences through dialogue.

The President's Weekly Address
April 2, 2011

Hello, everybody. I'm speaking to you today from a UPS Customer Center in Landover, Maryland, where I came to talk about an issue that's affecting families and businesses just like this one: the rising price of gas and what we can do as a country to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

This week, I released a blueprint for a secure energy future. It's a strategy to reduce the oil we import from around the world and to make our economy stronger at home. Part of this strategy involves increasing our oil exploration right here in America. In fact, our oil production last year reached its highest level since 2003, and we want to encourage more safe, responsible drilling where we can.

But the truth is, drilling alone is not a real strategy to replace our dependence on foreign oil. And that's because even though America uses 25 percent of the world's oil, we currently have only about 2 percent of the world's oil reserves. Even if we used every last drop of all the oil we have, it wouldn't be enough to meet our long-term energy needs. So real energy security can only come if we find ways to use less oil, if we invest in cleaner fuels and greater efficiency.

That's what we've been doing since I took office. For example, we secured an agreement from all the major auto companies to raise the fuel efficiency standards of their cars and trucks. So if you buy a new car, the better gas mileage is going to save you about $3,000. All together, this will save us about 1.8 billion barrels of oil as a country.

So we need to build on that progress. As we make our cars and trucks more efficient, we've got to harness new technologies to fuel our vehicles with everything from biofuels to natural gas to advanced batteries. And the good news is, these technologies aren't science fiction anymore. They exist today. Already American car companies are producing electric vehicles that use little or no gas. And innovators across America are testing new products that hold incredible promise not just for new vehicles, but for countless new jobs.

To help jump-start this market, the Federal Government has doubled the number of clean energy vehicles that we have in our fleet. In the next few years, we're going to switch the entire fleet over. And I'm here at UPS because it's not just the Government getting in on the action. Companies like UPS, FedEx, AT&T, Verizon, and PepsiCo, firms with some of the largest fleets in the country, are switching to more efficient vehicles. And through our Clean Fleets Partnership, driven not by Government, but by business, more companies are going to be switching to electric and alternative vehicles too, not out of the goodness of their hearts, but because it's good for their bottom lines.

The goal is simple. When I was elected to this office, America imported 11 million barrels of oil a day. Through these and other steps, by a little more than a decade from now, we

will have cut that by one third. And by doing so, we're going to make our economy less vulnerable to wild swings in oil prices, we're going to use cleaner sources of energy that don't imperil our climate, and we're going to spark new products and businesses all over the country by tapping America's greatest renewable resource: our ingenuity.

We know how important this is. This week, we learned that the economy added 230,000 private sector jobs last month. That makes 1.8 million private sector jobs created in the last 13 months. That's a good sign. But we have to keep up the momentum, and transitioning to a clean energy economy will help us do that. It will ensure that the United States of America is the home of the jobs and industries of tomorrow. That's how we'll win the future. That's how we'll leave our children an America that's more secure and prosperous than before.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:50 p.m. on April 1 at the UPS Customer Center in Landover, MD, for broadcast on April 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 1, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 2.

Statement on the Attack on a United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan Compound in Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan
April 2, 2011

Today the American people honor those who were lost in the attack on the United Nations in Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan. Once again, we extend our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of those who were killed and to the people of the nations that they came from. The desecration of any holy text, including the Koran, is an act of extreme intolerance and bigotry. However, to attack and kill innocent people in response is outrageous and an affront to human decency and dignity. No religion tolerates the slaughter and beheading of innocent people, and there is no justification for such a dishonorable and deplorable act. Now is a time to draw upon the common humanity that we share and that was so exemplified by the U.N. workers who lost their lives trying to help the people of Afghanistan.

Statement on the Death of Former Representative John H. Adler
April 4, 2011

Michelle and I were deeply saddened to learn of the premature passing of former Congressman John Adler today.

John was a dedicated public servant who fought tirelessly for the people of New Jersey for more than two decades. John always stood by his principles and served with an unwavering energy for the causes he believed in: creating jobs, providing tax relief for New Jersey families, and standing up for seniors and veterans.

Our hearts and prayers go out to John's wife Shelley and his sons Jeffrey, Alex, Andrew, and Oliver. John was taken from us far too soon, and he will be greatly missed.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report Related to Afghanistan and Pakistan
April 4, 2011

Dear _____:

In response to section 1117 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111–32, the "Act"), and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing the attached report related to Afghanistan and Pakistan. This is the third report submitted under

section 1117 of the Act and follows my September 2010 submission.

This report covers the period from July 1, 2010, through December 31, 2010, and provides an update on our assessment since that date. In December, my Administration completed a thorough review of our progress against our core policy objectives in Afghanistan and Pakistan during 2010. The 2010 Afghanistan-Pakistan Annual Review also included an evaluation of the progress made during the period of this report, which marked the full deployment of the U.S. troop "surge" to Afghanistan that I announced in December 2009.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate; Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid; Senate Minority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell; Daniel K. Inouye, chairman, and W. Thad Cochran, vice chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Carl M. Levin, chairman, and John S. McCain III, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; John F. Kerry, chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate committee on Foreign Relations; Joseph I. Lieberman, chairman, and Susan M. Collins, ranking member, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; Patrick J. Leahy, chairman, and Charles E. Grassley, ranking member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Dianne Feinstein, chair, and C. Saxby Chambliss, vice chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner; House Majority Leader Eric I. Cantor; House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi; Harold D. Rogers, chairman, and Norman D. Dicks, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, chairman, and Adam Smith, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services; Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, chair, and Howard L. Berman, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; Peter T. King, chairman, and Bennie G. Thompson, ranking member, House Committee on Homeland Security; Lamar S. Smith, chairman, and John J. Conyers, Jr., ranking member, House Committee on the Judiciary; and Michael J. Rogers, chairman, and C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, ranking member, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 5.

Remarks on the Federal Budget and an Exchange With Reporters
April 5, 2011

The President. Good afternoon. As many of you know, this morning I had a meeting with Speaker Boehner, Leader Reid, as well as the two Appropriations chairs, Inouye and Rogers, to discuss the situation with last year's budget, and I wanted to give you and, more importantly, the American people an update on where we are.

From the outset, my goal has been to significantly cut our domestic spending, but at the same time, make sure we're making key investments in things like education, infrastructure, innovation—the things that are going to help us win the future.

And over the course of the last several months, we have identified areas where we can make substantial cuts. In fact, what we've been able to do is to present to the House Republicans a budget framework that would cut the same amount of spending as Speaker Boehner and Chairman Rogers originally proposed—their original proposal for how much would be cut.

And several weeks ago, there were discussions in—between the White House and Speaker Boehner's office in which we said, let's start negotiating off of that number, $73 billion. We are now closer than we have ever been to getting an agreement. There's no reason why we should not get an agreement. As I said before, we have now matched the number that the Speaker originally sought.

The only question is whether politics or ideology are going to get in the way of preventing a Government shutdown. Now, what does this potentially mean for the American people? At a time when the economy is just beginning to grow, where we're just starting to see a pickup in employment, the last thing we need is a disruption that's caused by a Government shutdown. Not to mention all the people who depend on Government services: Whether you're a veteran or you're somebody who's trying to get a passport or you're planning to visit one of the national monuments or you're a business leader who's trying to get a small-business loan, you don't want delays, you don't want disruptions just because of usual politics in Washington.

So what I said to the Speaker today and what I said to Leader Reid and what I've said to the two Appropriations chairs is that myself, Joe Biden, my team, we are prepared to meet for as long as possible to get this resolved.

My understanding is that there's going to be a meeting between Speaker Boehner and Harry Reid this afternoon at 4 o'clock. The Speaker apparently didn't want our team involved in that discussion. That's fine. If they can sort it out, then we've got more than enough to do. If they can't sort it out, then I want them back here tomorrow. But it would be inexcusable for us to not be able to take care of last year's business that—keep in mind, we're dealing with a budget that could have gotten done 3 months ago, could have gotten done 2 months ago, could have gotten done last month—when we are this close simply because of politics.

And we are prepared to put whatever resources are required in terms of time and energy to get this done. But that's what the American people expect. They don't like these games, and we don't have time for them. There are some things that we can't control. We can't control earthquakes, we can't control tsunamis, we can't control uprisings on the other side of the world. What we can control is our capacity to have a reasoned, fair conversation between the parties and get the business of the American people done. And that's what I expect.

So I—again, I want to reiterate, my understanding is the Speaker and Leader Reid are going to have a meeting at 4 o'clock. If that issue does not get resolved and we don't start seeing progress, I want a meeting again tomorrow here at the White House. I will invite the same folks that we invited today. And if that doesn't work, we'll invite them again the day after that. And I will have my entire team available to work through the details of getting a deal done.

But right now there's no reason why we should not get this done. And we've got more than enough to do than to be spending our time going back and forth, quibbling around the edges on something this important to the American people.

All right, with that, I'm going to take a couple questions.

Ben [Ben Feller, Associated Press].

2011 Federal Budget/Budget Debate

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. If it came down to it, would you approve of a short-term spending bill to avoid a Government shutdown? And more broadly, as the American people are watching this, do you think that this is a test of your leadership? Do you think the American people are expecting you to make sure that this deal happens?

The President. Let me take each question separately.

On the issue of a short-term extension, we've already done that twice. We did it once for 2 weeks, then we did another one for 3 weeks. That is not a way to run a government. I can't have our agencies making plans based on 2-week budgets. I can't have the Defense Department, I can't have the State Department, I can't have our various agencies on food safety and making sure our water's clean and making sure that our airports are functioning, I can't have them making decisions based on 2-week-at-a-time budgets.

So I have been very clear that the last time we had an extension, it was to give the parties time to go ahead and get something done. We are now at the point where there is no excuse to extend this further.

If over the next 24 to 48 hours a deal is done and we just can't get the paperwork through

Congress quick enough and they want to do a clean extension for 2 or 3 days in order to go ahead and complete a deal, then that's something that we could support. But what we're not going to do is to once again put off something that should have gotten done several months ago.

Now, with respect to the second question, I think what the American people expect from me is the same thing that they expect from every Member of Congress, and that is that we're looking out for the interests of the American people and not trying to score political points.

I think what they're looking from me is the same thing that they're looking from Speaker Boehner and Harry Reid and everybody else, and that is, is that we act like grownups and, when we are in negotiations like this, that everybody gives a little bit, compromises a little bit in order to do the people's business.

And I just want to set the context for this now. Again, now, I'm going to repeat: Speaker Boehner, Chairman Rogers, the Republican Appropriations chairman, their original budget proposed $73 billion in cuts. We have now agreed to $73 billion worth of cuts. What they are now saying is, well, we're not sure that every single one of the cuts that you've made are ones that we agree to; we'd rather have these cuts rather than that cut. That's not the basis for shutting down the Government. We should be able to come up with a compromise in which nobody gets 100 percent of what they want, but the American people get the peace of mind in knowing that folks here in Washington are actually thinking about them, because they're going through a whole lot of struggles right now.

They're worrying about gas prices, and that's what they want us worrying about. They're worrying about jobs, and that's what we should be focused on. They're worrying about what—everything happening in the Middle East, what does that mean for them. And that's certainly what I'm spending my time worrying about. And I shouldn't have to oversee a process in which Congress deals with last year's budget, where we only have 6 months left, especially when both parties have agreed that we need to make substantial cuts and we're more or less at the same number.

All right?

Julianna [Julianna Goldman, Bloomberg News].

2012 Federal Budget

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Who should the American people blame if there is a Government shutdown? And also, I was wondering if you could respond to the budget plan that the House Republicans unveiled today?

The President. I don't think the American people are interested in blaming somebody. They want people to fix problems and offer solutions. They're not interested in finger-pointing, and neither am I. What I want to do is get the business of the American people done.

Now, we'll have time to have a long discussion about next year's budget, as well as the long-term debt and deficit issues, where we're going to have some very tough negotiations. And there are going to be, I think, very sharply contrasting visions in terms of where we should move the country. That's a legitimate debate to have. By the way, part of the reason that debate's going to be important is because that's where 88 percent of the budget is. What we're spending weeks and weeks and weeks arguing about is actually only 12 percent of the budget and is not going to significantly debt—dent the deficit or the debt.

So I'm looking forward to having that conversation. But right now we've got some business in front of us that needs to be done, and that is, making sure that we are cutting spending in a significant way, but we're doing it with a scalpel instead of a machete to make sure that we can still make investments in education, we can still make investments in infrastructure, we can still make investments that put the American people back to work and build our economy for the long term.

Jeff [Jeff Mason, Reuters].

2011 Federal Budget/Budget Debate

Q. Mr. President, thank you. What else does the White House have to offer to make sure

that a deal happens by Friday? And separately, could you tell us a little bit about your meeting with Mr. Peres?

The President. Well, look, we've got—we are happy to listen to any additional reasonable proposals. But I want to repeat what I just said: We are now at the figure that was Speaker Boehner's original proposal. Right? Now, Speaker Boehner originally called for $73 billion worth of cuts. Members of his caucus insisted on making it a hundred billion. What we've said is, we're willing to go to 73. Composition of those cuts, where they come from, those are all appropriate subjects of negotiation.

But by any standard, these would be reasonable cuts. In fact, if we made these cuts, they'd be, in absolute terms, the largest cuts in domestic discretionary spending in history. And in relative terms, they would be the largest cuts as a percentage of GDP since 1982. So I don't think anybody's suggesting, somehow, that we haven't been serious about this process.

As I said, there can be some negotiations about composition. What we can't be doing is using last year's budget process to have arguments about abortion, to have arguments about the Environmental Protection Agency, to try to use this budget negotiation as a vehicle for every ideological or political difference between the two parties. That's what the legislature is for, is to have those arguments, but not stuff it all into one budget bill.

And look, I think the American people recognize that we're in some pretty unsettled times right now. Certainly, businesses recognize that. Families recognize it. We don't have time for games. We don't have time for trying to score political points or maneuvering or positioning. Not on this. As I said, when it comes to long-term debt and deficit, there's going to be a real debate about how do we make sure that we have a social safety net for the American people; when folks have a tough time, how do we make sure that we're investing in the future, and how do we pay for it. And that is a legitimate debate to have.

But right now what we're talking about is 6 months remaining on the 2011 budget. We have already hit a figure that by any standard would be historic in terms of cuts, and what we can't do is have a "my way or the highway" approach to this problem. We can't have a "my way or the highway" approach to this problem, because if we start applying that approach, where I've got to get 110 percent of everything I want or else I'm going to shut down the Government, we're not going to get anything done this year. And the American people are going to be the ones that suffer.

Most of the Members of Congress, they've got enough of a cushion that they can probably put up with a Government shutdown. But there are a lot of people out there who can't.

If you're a small business right now, and you're counting on a small-business loan that may make a difference as to whether or not you can keep that business going, and you find out that you can't process it for 3 or 4 weeks—or 5 weeks or 6 weeks—because of some bickering in Washington, what does that say about our priorities? It doesn't make sense.

I'm going to take one last question.

Q. He had a question about Shimon Peres.

The President. Oh, I'm sorry.

Meeting With President Shimon Peres of Israel/Middle East/Egypt

Q. I asked about Peres as well, if you had anything about your meeting today.

The President. President Peres is, I think, an extraordinary statesman. We had a extensive discussion about what's happened in the Middle East. I think he and I both share a belief that this is both a challenge and an opportunity, that with the winds of change blowing through the Arab world, it's more urgent than ever that we try to seize the opportunity to create a peaceful solution between the Palestinians and the Israelis, and he had some very interesting ideas around those issues. He also recognizes the fact that in a country like Egypt, not only do we need to be nurturing democracy, but we also have to make sure that economic opportunity is growing there. And so we explored some ideas about how we can provide some help and make sure that young people there see a brighter future.

And that's something that Secretary Clinton, during her trip in Egypt, spoke extensively about and will probably be rolling out some additional plans on that front.

Last question.

2011 Federal Budget/Budget Debate

Q. Mr. President, Speaker Boehner says it's not just the specifics of what you guys want to cut and not cut, but that your cuts, the ones you have put on the table, are "smoke and mirrors." How do you answer that?

The President. Well, here's—I'll let Jay or Jack Lew or others get into all the details, but here's sort of a thumbnail of what's happened.

The vast majority of the cuts that have been put forward, just as was true in the Republican budget, are direct cuts out of domestic discretionary spending. There are some cuts that are—that we've proposed that have to do with mandatory spending. These are real cuts—for example, Pell grants. What we've said is, instead of being able to finance year-round Pell grants so that you can get a Pell grant for summer school as well, we're going to have to cut that out. It's a little too expensive. And we want to make sure that we preserve the levels for those young people or not-so-young people who are going to school full time during the year.

And the way they are categorized means that those are called mandatory spending cuts, as opposed to discretionary spending cuts. But they're still cuts. They're still reducing the size of Government. They're still getting rid of those things that we don't need in order to pay for the things that we do need.

And I think that if you ask the budget analysts out there, independent budget analysts, including the CBO, about the composition of what we've proposed versus what was in House bill—the House bill that passed a while back, H.R. 1, this is consistent with those basic principles.

So this notion that somehow we're offering smoke and mirrors, try telling that to the Democrats out there, because part of what we've done is, we've been willing to cut programs that we care deeply about, that are really important, but we recognize that given the fiscal situation that we're in, everybody's got to make some sacrifices, everybody's got to take a haircut. And we've been willing to do that.

But what we're not willing to do is to go out there and say we're going to cut another 60,000 head slot starts—Head Start slots. We're not going to be willing to go out there and say that we're going to cut medical research. We're not going to cut those things that we think are absolutely vital to the growth of the American economy and putting people back to work.

And that means we've got to make some choices. And that is not just true for us, that's true for the Republicans as well. Nobody gets a hundred percent of what they want. And we have more than met the Republicans halfway at this point.

Okay? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:02 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to White House Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney.

Statement on the Situation in Cote d'Ivoire
April 5, 2011

I remain deeply concerned by the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire. I strongly support the role that United Nations peacekeepers are playing as they enforce their mandate to protect civilians, and I welcome the efforts of French forces who are supporting that mission. Tragically, the violence that we are seeing could have been averted had Laurent Gbagbo respected the results of last year's Presidential election. To end this violence and prevent more bloodshed, former President Gbagbo must stand down immediately and direct those who are fighting on his behalf to lay down their arms. Every day that the fighting persists will

bring more suffering and further delay the future of peace and prosperity that the people of Cote d'Ivoire deserve.

The people of Cote d'Ivoire have suffered too much throughout this period of unrest. The United States joins with the international community in our deep concern about reports of massacres in the western region of the country and the dangers faced by innocent civilians, particularly the most vulnerable. All parties must show restraint and respect the rights of the Ivorian people, and I welcome President Ouattara's pledge to ensure accountability for those who have carried out attacks against civilians. Meanwhile, the United States will continue to support a future in which Laurent Gbagbo stands down and President Ouattara and the Government of Cote d'Ivoire can move beyond this current crisis and serve all of the Ivorian people.

Statement on the First Anniversary of the Accident at the Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia
April 5, 2011

On the 1-year anniversary of the tragedy at the Upper Big Branch Mine, America's thoughts and prayers are never far from the miners who lost their lives and the loved ones they left behind.

During the past year, my administration has worked to investigate the cause of the explosion, bring those responsible to justice, and take the steps necessary to prevent a similar tragedy from occurring again. The Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration launched a thorough investigation into the cause of the explosion and took aggressive steps to combat mine operators who fail to meet their obligations to provide for the safety and health of their miners. The Justice Department's investigation into the mine owner's practices in West Virginia has led, so far, to two criminal indictments.

While these collaborative efforts have changed the way some mine operators do business, we know we can also improve our mine safety laws to better provide for the safety of the men and women who work in America's mines and for their families' peace of mind. That's why the Department of Labor has worked aggressively to institute new measures to help prevent future incidents, including an impact inspection process to target mines with persistent violations. That's why, for the first time in more than 30 years, the Department of Labor successfully argued that a Federal court could temporarily close a mine with severe safety problems. And that's why I continue to support Chairman Harkin and Chairman Kline and their efforts to strengthen America's mine safety laws. Because we owe the men and women who do this important work and the families who love them our best efforts, not just in memory of the 29 miners who lost their lives in last year's tragedy, but to ensure that such a tragedy doesn't happen again.

NOTE: The statement referred to Sen. Thomas R. Harkin, in his capacity as chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; and Rep. John P. Kline, in his capacity as chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting and a Question-and-Answer Session at the Gamesa Technology Corporation Manufacturing Facility in Fairless Hills, Pennsylvania
April 6, 2011

The President. Thank you so much. Everybody, please have a seat, have a seat.

Hello, Fairless Hills! Hello, Gamesa! It is good to be here. I was here 3 years ago. I was

then a candidate. How many folks were here at the time? Anybody remember? We had a good visit. I signed a blade, I think, while I was here. I didn't have as much gray hair back then. [*Laughter*] You guys still look great. I'm a little worn down.

It is great to be back, and I love visiting places where people are actually making stuff, because that's what America is about. Everybody here, you are helping to build towers that are going to stand 400 feet in the air and generate enough electricity to power 600 homes. And the blades alone are 140 feet long, so these aren't your father's windmills. These are wind turbines. You guys are not messing around. This is the future of American energy.

So I wanted to come back partly because over the last 2 years since I've been President, just as I promised when I was here as a candidate, I have been promoting and boosting clean energy. I think it's absolutely critical for our future. And it's also nice to be next to cool products.

I think that what you do here is a glimpse of the future, and it's a future where America is less dependent on foreign oil, more reliant on clean energy produced by workers like you. And I know that this is—this whole issue of energy is on the minds of a lot of people right now, partly because you're paying more at the pump. Anybody notice that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. You noticed that a little bit.

The fact is, for a lot of folks, money was already tight before gas prices started climbing, especially for some families where the husband or the wife had been out of work or you've had to get by with fewer customers or hours on the job. Having high gas prices is just one more added burden.

But I want everybody to remember, every time gases go up, we see the same pattern. Washington gets all worked up, just like clockwork. Republicans and Democrats both start making a lot of speeches. Usually the Democrats blame the Republicans, the Republicans blame the Democrats. Everybody's going in front of the cameras, and they've got some new three-point plan to promise 2-dollar-a-gallon gas. And then nothing happens. And then gas prices go down, and then suddenly, it's not in the news anymore, and everybody forgets about it until the next time gas prices go back up again.

That's what was happening when I was running three years ago. You remember "drill, baby, drill"? That was because the economy was overheated, gas prices were skyrocketing, and everybody made a lot of speeches, but not much happened. And I said then that we can't afford to continue this kind of being in shock when gas prices go up and then suddenly being in a trance when things go back down again. We've got to have a sustained energy policy that is consistent, that recognizes that there's no magic formula to driving gas prices down, it's a steady improvement in terms of how we use energy and where we get energy from. That's what's going to make a difference. That's how we're going to secure our energy future.

So last week, I laid out a vision of how we could do this. It's a plan that says we're not going to play the usual Washington politics that have prevented progress on energy for decades. Instead, what we're going to do is we're going to take every good idea out there, whether you're Republican or Democrat, whatever the idea, from environmentalists, from oil men like T. Boone Pickens. I want to have a comprehensive energy strategy that can help us move forward. And that means we've got to pursue every breakthrough, every renewable resource, every technology, every approach to change the way we produce and use energy.

And through this plan, what we want to do is promote all kinds of homegrown energy. That's what's going to help us secure our energy future. That's what's going to help us win the future.

Now, first of all, what I want to do is, in a decade, I want us to have cut by one-third the amount of oil that we imported when I was elected to this office. I want to cut our energy imports by a third.

Now, understand why that's so important, because when you see what happens in the Middle East and suddenly the world oil markets get spooked, even if the supply is there,

your gas prices are going to go up. The less we import, the more control we have over what happens at the pump.

Second, through sources like wind energy, produced in part by your turbines, I want us to double the amount of electricity that we draw from clean sources. I want us to double it. And that means by 2035, 80 percent of our electricity will come from renewables like wind and solar, as well as efficient natural gas, clean coal, nuclear power. We can do that.

And by the way, that would make a huge difference here at Gamesa. This is an approach that says we're not going to pick one energy source over another. What we do is we set a target, an achievable goal, and then we give industry the flexibility to achieve it. We say to the utilities, you've got to get this much energy from renewable sources, and then wind is competing with solar, is competing with natural gas. And there's a healthy competition out there, and everybody starts getting better at what they do because you're producing more and you know you've got a reliable customer for it.

So we're cutting oil imports by a third. We're going to get 80 percent of our electricity from clean sources. And if we follow through on this, if we actually tackle this challenge, here's what will happen: Our economy will be less vulnerable to wild swings in oil prices. Our Nation will no longer be beholden to the countries that we now rely on for oil imports. We won't be sending billions of dollars a day to the Middle East. We can potentially keep some of that invested right here at home.

We'll reduce the pollution that's disrupting our climate and threatening the planet that we leave for our children and our grandchildren. We'll become more energy independent. And we'll spark innovation and entrepreneurship across America. We will be more likely to win the global competition for new jobs and new industries, because I don't know about you, I don't want China to be the world's leading wind power manufacturer. I want the United States to be the leading manufacturer of wind power. I want it made right here in the U.S. of A.

Same thing goes with solar, same thing goes—you name—whatever energy source, I want us to be the best. That's how we'll win the future. But we're going to have to outinnovate the world. And this plant is a good example. For decades, this was part of steel country. Thousands went to work in the old buildings that lined these streets, forging the metal that built our trains and our ships and our cars and our skyscrapers.

But you know the story. The economy changed. Those jobs vanished. A lot of empty factories started lining these same streets.

But this company brought jobs back to these floors. Buildings that were dark, they're now humming again. We got more than 250 people on the job at these plants and 800 workers across the State. And Gamesa has partnered with Bucks County Community College to create a green jobs academy that serves as a pipeline for new workers as the company expands. And there are other companies pursuing clean energy along these streets as well.

This has made a difference in this community. It's made a difference for folks like Jim Bauer. Is Jim around? Where's Jim? There's Jim right there. Hey, Jim! See, I heard about Jim because he lost his job when the mills closed, but then he'd be pretty soon working again in the shadow of where he spent 25 years in the steel industry. Now he's here.

And there was a quote that we got from Jim. He said: "I was forced into retirement"—"after I was forced into retirement, nobody would hire me for any kind of decent money. Then I saw an ad looking for steelworkers to join Gamesa, and now I'm happy to contribute to something that's important."

And that—there are a lot of folks out there like Jim who are hard-working, have great skills, but maybe haven't gotten a chance, and there's no reason why they can't be working in a place that's doing some important things.

But times are still tough. A lot of people out there are still looking for work. And I'll be honest with you, not every manufacturing job that used to be here from the steel companies are going to come back, because if you go to a steel plant now these days, it may take 10 workers to

produce what it used to take 100 workers to produce, just because of automation and new technologies. But Jim's story should give us hope. It should give us some idea of the promise of clean energy for our country.

Let me just say this one last thing and then I want to take some questions. None of this is going to be easy. When people—when politicians tell you something's going to be easy, they're not telling you the truth. If it was easy, somebody would have already done it and taken credit for it and had a photo op. Reducing our dependence on oil, doubling the clean energy we use, helping to grow our economy by securing our energy future, that's going to be a big challenge. And it's going to require effort. It's going to require ingenuity. It's going to require us coming together. It's going to require us getting past some of the petty politics that we play sometimes. But we can meet that challenge.

We're not going to always agree with each other on everything. We live in a big country. We've got a robust democracy, and that's fine. But we should agree on some basic things. We should be able to agree on developing clean energy and reducing our dependence on foreign oil. We should be able to agree that we need to invest in things like our roads and our bridges and our infrastructure, because we used to have the best infrastructure in the world, and we don't right now; other countries have gone past us. And if we were investing in our infrastructure we'd be putting more people to work.

You know, I don't expect everybody to always agree with me. But coming here today, I was reminded of what I said right here 3 years ago, back when it wasn't sure that I was going to win the election. I mean, you guys couldn't pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] But here's what I said. I said, I am not a perfect man, and I will not be a perfect President. But I can promise you this: I will always tell you where I stand. I will be honest with you about the challenges we face and how we can solve these problems. And I will take what I hear from you—your voices, your struggles, your hopes, your dreams—that's what I'm going to be thinking about every single day when I'm in the White House. And I have kept that promise. I have kept that promise. I'm thinking about you guys every single day when I'm in the White House. And I'm going to keep pushing, and I'm going to keep fighting for you.

With all that's going on in the world, with all the challenges we're facing, that's what I think about every single day when I wake up: what matters to you. I want to make sure everybody who wants a job can find one, everybody can pay their bills, everybody can raise their kids and give them a better life. And that's what all of us should be thinking about. Some of you may have heard the latest argument in Washington, our—the fight over last year's budget. Keep in mind, we're not arguing about this year's budget, we're arguing about last year's budget. It makes it tough to win the future when you haven't passed the budget from last year.

So I asked Congress to send me a budget that makes some serious spending cuts, but still invests in things like clean energy, still invests in research, still invests in infrastructure, still invests in education—investments that are critical for us to be able to compete with any country in the world. That's what I asked for. I asked for it several months ago.

Now, after weeks of negotiations, we've now agreed to cut as much spending as the Republicans in Congress originally asked for. I've got some Democrats mad at me. But I said, you know what, let's get past last year's budget and let's focus on the future. So we've agreed to a compromise, but somehow we still don't have a deal, because some folks are trying to inject politics in what should be a simple debate about how to pay our bills. They're stuffing all kinds of issues in there: abortion and the environment and health care. And you know, there are times to have those discussions, but that time is not now. Right now we need to just make sure that we pay our bills and that the Government stays open. And if we don't reach common ground by Saturday, the Federal Government shuts down. And some of you may not be that sympathetic. You may say, well, let it shut down, what do I care? But here's the thing. When Government shuts

down, it means that that small-business owner who's waiting to get a loan, suddenly, nobody's there to process it. He may not get that loan and that business may not open. And whoever he was planning to hire, suddenly, he may not have that job that he was counting on.

It may turn out that somebody who was trying to get a mortgage can't have their paperwork processed by the FHA and now the person who was going to sell the house, what they were counting on, they can't get it.

Folks who were planning a vacation to Yellowstone, well, it turns out national parks, suddenly, you're closed; you're out of luck. You may have to try to figure out if you can get your money back for that resort you were going to stay at.

I mean, these are things that affect ordinary families day in, day out, and it affects our economy right at the time when our economy is getting momentum. We had the best jobs report we had had in a very long time this past Friday. But you know what? Companies don't like uncertainty, and if they start seeing that suddenly, we may have a shutdown of our Government, that could halt momentum right when we need to build it up, all because of politics.

I do not want to see Washington politics stand in the way of America's progress. At a time when you're struggling to pay your bills and meet your responsibilities, the least we can do is meet our responsibilities to produce a budget. That's not too much to ask for. That's what the American people expect of us. That's what they deserve. You want everybody to act like adults, quit playing games, realize that it's not just my way or the highway. How many folks are married here? When was the last time you just got your way? [*Laughter*] That's not how it works, right? He lifted his wife's hand up—[*laughter*]—you know, no.

I mean, the fact is, is that you have to make compromises as a family. That's what we are, the American family. So Democrats and Republicans need to get together, work through their differences, keep the Government running so we can focus on keeping this economy growing, focus on things like clean energy, driving down gas prices. That's our job. That's what people want to see: results. You deserve no less than that.

So this is a challenging time for America, and we've been through the worst recession since I was—before I was born. A lot of folks are still hurting out there. But if we come together, if we listen to each other, if we remember that we're one Nation, that we're one people, then I'm confident that we're going to come out of this period stronger than we were before.

And what makes me confident is seeing all of you and seeing what I see all across America: people who have drive and who have optimism and who are decent and do right by their families and do right by their communities. That's what's lifted us out of tough times before. That's what's going to carry forward America into the future.

So thank you, Gamesa, for the great work you're doing. And with that, let me take some questions. Appreciate you. Thank you. Thank you.

All right. We've got these wonderful volunteers who are—have their mikes, and they're going to come up so that I can hear your question. This young man right here—who had their hand up right—right here, this gentleman. Introduce yourself too.

Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources and Technologies

Q. Daniel Ream, sir. In 2009, the Center for American Progress sponsored the National Clean Energy Project, in which they detailed the implementation of an efficient, high-voltage grid that would extend from coast to coast. Now our particular product can only apply to so many mountains, valleys, and regions before we run out of space. It's critical that this grid be established so we can continue to grow these green-collar jobs and maintain this product within our American shores. What's the current level of appropriations being provided for this particular endeavor, and how high a priority is it for your current Cabinet?

The President. Now, that was a good question there. [*Laughter*] I mean, huh? Is that how he talks all the time? [*Laughter*] Man, I

better take off my jacket. All right. [*Laughter*] That was serious.

No, listen, it actually was a great question. I think a lot of you guys are aware, there are some places—say, the Dakotas—where it's flat and you've just got a lot of wind, but you may not have a lot of customers. And so the question for wind power and solar power and a lot of these renewable energy industries is if we're producing the energy one place, how do we get it to another place? And that's why this whole concept of a smart grid is really important. And a smart grid is just a fancy name for a better electricity grid than what we've got right now. Because the way it works right now, we've got this patchwork of all these different electricity grids and connectors, and there's all this leakage, and a bunch of it was created decades ago, so it's not particularly efficient.

And so the idea of a smart grid is, if you can hook up a national electricity grid that is state of the art and it has switches and computer monitors that are able to help regulate the flow of electricity to the places that need it when they need it, then you can save huge amounts of electricity, which means that your bills are lower. It means that we have to produce less energy per household or per business, which means we're sending less pollution into the air, whatever form of energy we're using. It means that renewable energies like solar and wind now have an advantage because you can get them from where they're being created to where they need to go. And because it's more efficient, there's less waste so you can actually store wind energy even when it's not windy or solar energy even when it's not sunny. So this is a huge and important project.

It turns out that the challenge is not so much a money issue. When you said appropriations, you know, the question was, does—are we going to—is Congress going to put a lot of money into building this thing? It turns out, actually, that you could probably get a lot of private sector dollars to invest in a smart grid. The big challenge is actually all these different zoning laws because people don't want transmission lines, et cetera, in their vicinity, and each State and each local government has its own control about siting issues. And so you've got this patchwork, instead of one national concept.

So what I've been trying to do—and this wouldn't cost a lot of money—is just to get Governors, mayors, county officials, Federal Government all to sit down and figure out, how can we get this done? How can we get this done? And it may start just in certain sections of the country. So you'd have a smart grid in, let's say, the upper Midwest, and then you'd have another smart grid in the Northeast. And you kind of build these bigger patchworks, and then you kind of stitch them all together at the end.

We should be able to get this done, but it's going to require some organization, and it requires cooperation from each of these different units of government than we've got right now. All right? Okay. And if you want to be a TV commentator, you let me know. [*Laughter*]

All right. Who's next? Who's next? Gentleman right here.

Price of Oil/Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources and Technologies

Q. How you doing, Mr. President?

The President. I'm good.

Q. My name is Jazz. You were talking about the rise of gas prices. Is there any way that—talks of lowering the prices? I mean, I know back in the seventies when we had this conflict, they were going from—our license plates, from odd to evens, days we could get gas. I know we're not at that stage right now, but they did lower the prices after that. Is there a chance of the price being lowered again?

The President. Well, let me go over what I said a little bit earlier. Most of the reason the gas price spiked 3 years ago was demand for oil increased. Then what happened was we had the terrible recession. A lot of businesses closed, a lot of folks were out of work, folks were driving fewer miles, so demand for oil goes down, prices went down. And by the way, oil prices are worldwide prices, so you don't just have, like, a U.S. market for oil; you've got

a world market for oil. Anything that happens anywhere in the world will lower the price.

So now the economy is picking up, which is a good thing. More folks are finding jobs. Businesses are starting to hire again. And that's happening all around the world. So now you're starting to see demand go back up, and the prices are going back up. You add on top of that what's happening in the Middle East, and it makes folks nervous. And so these folks start saying, you know what, I'm going to bid a higher price on oil, on a barrel of oil now, because I'm thinking it's going to go up a little further in case something happens on the world oil markets. And that pushes prices up just a little bit more.

Now, there are a couple of things that we can do. But I'm just going to be honest with you, there's not much we can do next week or 2 weeks from now. What we can do is, for example, increase oil production here in the United States. So we are out there—here's a little secret for you. We actually have seen higher oil production here in the United States than any time in our history. We are producing a lot of oil. It's just demand keeps on going up faster than production. But we can still do more.

Now, we just had the Gulf crisis last summer when everything was messed up. And so what I had to do was I had to say, you know what, before we start drilling again out there, then I want you guys to show me proof that you can actually do this safely and when something goes wrong, you can cap that thing so we're not going through 6 months of oil just spilling into the ocean and ruining coastal communities and hurting fishermen and so forth. We now have a situation where the safety rules have been improved and drilling is beginning again in that region. But the drilling that's taking place in the Gulf now, that product doesn't get to market right away.

We're also saying, let's look in places like off the Atlantic or in Alaska. If there are other places where we can do some offshore drilling, we'll do it. But here's the thing about oil. We have about 2, maybe 3 percent of the world's proven oil reserves; we use 25 percent of the world's oil. So think about it. Even if we doubled the amount of oil that we produce, we'd still be short by a factor of five.

So we can't just drill our way out of the problem. And that's why the second thing we can do is increase efficiency on cars and trucks, which is where most of our oil is used. Now, I notice some folks clapped, but I know some of these big guys, they're all still driving their big SUVs. You know, they got their big monster trucks and everything. You're one of them? Well, now, here's my point. If you're complaining about the price of gas and you're only getting 8 miles a gallon—[*laughter*]—you may have a big family, but it's probably not that big. So—how many you have? Ten kids, you say? Ten kids? [*Laughter*] Well, you definitely need a hybrid van then. [*Laughter*]

But here's the thing is that last year, for the first time in 30 years, we increased fuel efficiency standards on cars and trucks. And we didn't do it, by the way, with a law. We got autoworkers, auto companies, environmentalists—everybody agreed to it. That's going to save us about 1.8 billion barrels of oil. But we can do more. The more efficient our auto fleets are, the more efficient our truck fleets are, the less people are using, that lowers gas prices as well. So that's the second thing we can do.

The third thing we can do is we can start looking at electric cars and maybe natural gas cars, so that we're not just using petroleum to power our vehicles. That would be, by the way, a huge boost for Gamesa. If you've got a much better distribution network for electric cars—right now some of these electrics, you should be able to just plug it in into your garage; you basically just have a big socket. You plug it in at night, unplug it, you're driving it all day. You get home, you plug it back in, and if you've got one of these smart boxes in your garage, the unused electricity from your car actually goes back into your house. And so you're saving both ways.

But the problem is right now that we don't have a broad enough distribution network. The cost of advanced batteries for cars is still a little bit too expensive, so we're trying to drive down the price. It's like anything else, though; it's the

same with your wind turbine, the same with wind energy: the more you make, the cheaper it gets, because the technology improves, you're creating more of them, you get economies of scale.

So number one, increase oil production. But that's not a short—that's not a long—a short-term solution, and it's a not a long-term solution either; it will just—it will help a little bit. Number two, more efficient cars so we're using our gas more effectively. Number three, shifting to electric cars and other forms of transportation so we don't use oil as much.

None of that is going to help you this week though. So, like I said, if you're getting 8 miles a gallon you may want to think about a trade-in. You can get a great deal. I promise you, GM or Ford or Chrysler, they're going to be happy to give you a deal on something that gets you better gas mileage.

All right. Young lady right here.

Exports

Q. Mr. President, I want to thank you for going to Latin America a couple weeks ago. And this is a great story where Ex-Im Bank and Gamesa worked together to supply over 50 turbines to Honduras for example.

The President. Right.

Q. If you could elaborate more on your National Export Initiative, I think that that would be an amazing thing to talk about.

The President. Well, that's a good point. You guys are selling some of your turbines overseas, partly because what's called the Export-Import Bank, which is a Government agency that helps businesses market to overseas markets, hooked up with Gamesa and saw—discovered this way where they could get into that market.

Now, one of the ways that we got in trouble before the recession was we were borrowing a lot of money to buy a lot of stuff from somebody else. Right? I mean, basically, what happened was we ran up our credit cards, we took out home equity loans, and we bought a lot of flat-screen TVs, and we bought a lot of whatever you all buy. [*Laughter*] I didn't want to get personal in terms of all the things that you might have purchased. But a lot of it was made somewhere else. And that was great for China. That was great for some of these other countries that are exporting to the United States, but it wasn't very good for U.S. industry.

The way countries succeed over the long term is by making stuff and selling it to somebody else. So what—my—I set a goal. I said I want to double our exports. I want to double our exports over the next 5 years, and we can do it. We've already increased our exports by 18 percent. Now, that's a good start, but that means we got another 80 percent to go. And that's where using something like the Export-Import Bank can be really important, because a lot of these other countries give a big advantage to their exporters. They help give them financing. They help them find markets. They negotiate deals for them. And my attitude is, well, if they're doing it for their companies, I want to make sure we're doing it for our companies. And I want to make sure that goods that we're producing here in the United States get sold other places.

We've got the best technology. We've got the best workers in the world. But we are such a big market that a lot of times we've been focused more internally than thinking about how can we sell to other countries. And we can't be afraid of competition. We've got to go after it. All right?

Young lady right there. Yes, you.

Tax Reform/Manufacturing Industry

Q. Hi, my name is Singaza Bell. Yes, my question is in light of what you just said. What of corporate tax incentives and R&D tax incentives that will make companies like Gamesa do their manufacturing here? Because it's one thing to have the knowledge base in the United States, but we really need manufacturing back here.

The President. You're right, and the reason that companies locate in different places is complicated. A lot of it has to do with the fact that labor costs may be lower in some of these other countries, but a lot of it has to do with our Tax Code, which is kind of screwy.

On paper, we've got the highest tax—one of the highest Tax Codes for corporations in the

world—on paper. But here's the catch, we have so many loopholes that it turns out you've got a whole bunch of companies who are paying no taxes or barely paying taxes or they keep their money in offshore accounts and it doesn't get reinvested back here in the United States of America.

So this is one of the reasons why I've said that I think it would make sense for us to reform our Tax Code, simplify it, lower the rate for corporations, but eliminate a bunch of the loopholes so that everybody is paying the same and it's fair.

Because what you pay in taxes should not depend on how good your lawyer is or how good your accountant is. If you make a certain amount of money, that's what you should pay. And I think that same principle, by the way, we can apply to individuals as well. So one of the things I'm interested in is looking at tax reform. Ninety percent of you shouldn't even have to probably file a return.

The way electronics works these days, you should be able to—with your W–2, it gets plugged in, it's on a computer somewhere, here's your refund, you sign something electronically, it gets done.

Most people don't itemize. If you don't itemize, sending in some complicated return is just a waste of paperwork. And even if you do itemize, most of you probably, it's your mortgage on your house—interest payments on your mortgage and a couple other things. It shouldn't be some 2-week ordeal.

And by the way, because sometimes folks will say, well, you don't have to do your taxes. Look, it's true, I don't do my taxes anymore. I've got other stuff that I've got to do. But it wasn't that long ago when I did do my taxes. I remember. It was terrible. [*Laughter*] Just like I remember pumping gas. I don't pump gas anymore, but I remember what it was like when you filled it up and it turned out you didn't have as much money as you thought.

So I think we can actually simplify it. But on manufacturing, tax reform on the corporate side could make a difference. The other thing, though, is in terms of encouraging manufacturing, we've got to understand what our advantage is. See, we'll never compete in terms of low wages; there's always going to be someplace that has lower wages than we do. We're a wealthy country.

So if a company just wants to make plastic toys, we're just not going to be able to keep up with that. But when it comes to high-end, high-skilled jobs, those are the kind of manufacturing jobs we have to go after. And that's where research, innovation is so important. That's where on something like clean energy, making sure that there's a market for that clean energy is so important. That's what's going to produce manufacturing jobs, making sure we've got a good smart grid. Those are the kinds of things that are going to make sure that we have the high-end manufacturing here in our country.

And I just want to introduce—there's a guy right here, this guy, I'm going to embarrass him. His name is Ron Bloom. Ron is actually the guy who helped us save the auto industry. He helped to design our program to make sure that GM and Chrysler did not get liquidated and did not go under. And by the way, I don't know if you guys heard, a couple weeks back GM said it was now going to hire back every single worker that had been laid off—every single worker that had been laid off.

So Ron is now working to develop manufacturing strategies for every industry around the country, and he's doing great work. And I'm sure he's going to be talking to the folks here at Gamesa and others in terms of finding ways that we can increase manufacturing here in the United States all across the country.

All right, gentleman right here.

Tax Reform/Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources and Technologies

Q. Hello. David Campbell. My question is in regards to the ITC and the PTC—the investment tax credit and the production tax credit, renewable energy. It's somewhat known that the large energy developers act somewhat volatile depending on the looming deadlines in some of the provisions in those tax credits. And

they have been known, and they've been spoken on in the industry as being helpful. Can you just speak on how your administration plans to support that or plans to continue to support it because you already are?

The President. We want to make them permanent so that people aren't looking every few years to try to figure out is this investment going to be there for us.

I want to kick-start this industry. I want to make sure we've got good customers, and I want to make sure that there's the financing there so that we can meet that demand. And there's no reason why we can't do both, but it does require us getting past some of these political arguments.

I don't understand why some folks think that if you promote clean energy that somehow you're some pointy-headed, environmentalist type, but if you're all about just drilling and getting more oil, then you're a tough guy.

If oil is what you've got and it works for you, and you can—then there's nothing wrong with oil. But when you only have 2, 3 percent of the world's oil reserves, why wouldn't you want to develop alternative sources of energy that are cleaner and more efficient and that produce manufacturing jobs like are being produced right here.

Sometimes, people say, well, what about coal? Look, coal—we are the Saudi Arabia of coal. We've got a whole lot of coal, but the fact of the matter is, coal—if we don't have clean coal technologies to catch the particles that are sent up in the air, it causes serious pollution that increases the rates of asthma and is contributing to weather patterns changing. So we should work on technologies to make coal cleaner. But that doesn't mean that it's an either-or; it's a both-and.

We can use oil, use coal. We're going to need those for a while. But let's also develop these new energies, these cleaner energies, that can really make a difference. We're going to need bipartisan support for that. That's what I'm hoping we're going to be able to get.

All right. Gentleman right here.

Importing Oil/Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources and Technologies

Q. Hi, Mr. President. First off, thank you very much on behalf of everyone here for coming today. It really means a lot to us.

The President. You bet.

Q. My name is Alan Berchel. I'm a Canadian. I just moved here about a year ago. And my question for you today is in reference to the Canadian tar sands. Now, we've heard you speak today about the importance of manufacturing things domestically for the purpose of exporting. We've heard you speak about the importance of domestic energy security, as well the importance of outperforming China in terms of the ability for us to manufacture wind turbines.

Now, I would like to know how you balance your commitment to the environment with domestic energy security, given that there has been recent domestic dissent from the idea of importing Canadian oil, and as well, keeping in mind that it does require energy in order to manufacture these turbines, if you do not import the Canadian tar sands oil, you are opening the door to further investments by Suncor in Canada. As well you're essentially offering up this very vast and politically stable oil—energy resource to a country like China. I just want to know how you're balancing all these different pressures.

The President. Did you talk to this guy? [*Laughter*] You know—[*laughter*]. There's—for those—just to give background to folks, there are these tar sands in Canada that can produce oil. There is talk about building a pipeline into the United States to import that oil. I can't comment on the specifics of this because the State Department is going through this complicated review process, and if it looks like I'm putting my fingers on the scale before the science is done, then people may question the merits of the decision later on. So I'm not going to get into the details of it.

I will make this general point, which is that, first of all, importing oil from countries that are stable and friendly is a good thing. So, for example, some of you saw I went down to Brazil a couple of weeks back. And I know people

think I was going there to see samba dancers or something, play soccer. I was going down there partly because Brazil is actually already doing a really good job with biofuels. They've got some of the best cellulosic ethanol, this ethanol that's not made with corn, but it's made with, like, sugar cane stalks.

So I think a third of their cars already on the road run on biofuels. So I wanted to make sure that we learn from them; this goes to the point about another way that we can lower oil—gas prices. But they also just had these huge discoveries of oil off their shores underwater, pretty deep down. And can we start working with them using our outstanding technology, some of the lessons we've learned in the Gulf, to create another regular source or supply of oil.

Canada already is one our largest oil exporters, or that's—we import from Canada. These tar sands, there are some environmental questions about how destructive they are, potentially, what are the dangers there, and we've got to examine all those questions. It's the same thing with natural gas here in Pennsylvania. Everybody has been hearing about the whole fracking issue, right?

Now, natural gas is a clean, relatively clean energy. It's a fossil fuel, but it burns pretty clean. But we've got to make sure that as we're extracting it from the ground, that the chemicals that are being used don't leach into the water. Nobody is an environmentalist until you get sick. And it turns out, well, gosh, why didn't somebody tell me that this might affect the water that we drink or the air that we breathe or what have you? So we've got to do some science there to make sure that the natural gas that we have in this country, we're extracting in a safe way. The same thing is true when it comes to oil that's being piped in from Canada, or Alaska for that matter. We just got to do these evaluations, and we're always trying to do that based on the science. All right?

Let me see. This guy right here in the glasses. Yes.

Education Reform/Federal Budget

Q. Hey, Mr. President. Welcome back.

The President. Great to be back.

Q. My children—I have seven of my children and eight grandchildren. I was just wondering, like, what are we going to do about their education? Because we're falling into cutting this school, we're cutting five schools, six schools here and all. I mean, that's our future. If we're cutting their heads off, then where are we going to be in 30 or 40 years?

The President. It's a great question. Can I just ask before I answer, though, is there some rule at Gamesa that you got to have a whole bunch of kids? [*Laughter*] I mean, you got 10 over here, you got 7 over here. Golly. [*Laughter*]

Look, the single most important determinant of how we do as an economy is going to be how educated our workforce is. That's our biggest competitive advantage, is having workers who are skilled. If we've got the best scientists, if we've got the best engineers, if we've got the best mathematicians, if we've got workers who know how to—as they do here at Gamesa—to use high-tech equipment, that's what's going to be our advantage.

Like I said, we're not going to win the race just by driving our wages down, because we'll never win that race. I mean, China doesn't even have the lowest wages now. Some companies are now moving to the next country that's got lower wages than China, because China's economy is starting to grow. There's always going to be some country out there with lower wages. But we can outeducate anybody. And we used to have—we used to have the best education system in the world. We used to have the number-one percentage of college graduates in the world. We don't anymore. Our kids used to do the best on math and science exams; now we're like 9th, 12th, 21st. And that means that other countries are going to pass us by.

This is why even in these tough budget times, where we need to cut the things that we don't need, we can't stop investing in education. We can't stop investing in education. I put forward my budget proposal for next year, and almost every department I cut. One department I didn't cut: Education. I did not cut education; I actually increased our investment in education.

Now, money is not the only thing that makes a good school, so we've also got to reform our schools. Some schools are not structured to make sure kids learn. There are schools out there where they've got enough money, but for whatever reason, most of the time they're in poor neighborhoods, but part of it is also that the teachers, the principals, et cetera, they're not working together in as effective a way with the parents and the community to make sure that there are high expectations for the kids and everybody is performing.

So what we've said is, yes, we're going to put more money in the schools, but we're also going to reform the schools. And part of the money that we've done is—what we've done is we've carved out some of this money, and we've said, instead of it just going to every school district based on some formula, we want you to compete for it. Come up with a plan explaining how you're going to reform our education system: how you're going to make sure there are high standards for every kid, how you're going to get the best teachers, how you're going to train and retain those teachers, how you're going to make sure that the schools are accountable. And if you do those things, we're going to give you a little bit of extra money. And it gives an incentive for every State and every school district to start looking at what they're doing to see if they're using the best practices possible to educate our kids. So that's on the K-through-12 level.

We also have to focus on community colleges, because that's—it's not just enough to have kids getting good educations. We have to have adults who are constantly retraining. I mean, how many here—how many folks here who are working at Gamesa took some sort of training class at a community college that helped them along the way? Anybody? Look at that. Right? So we've got a decent number of folks who, maybe you've got a career change, maybe your old skills are a little obsolete now, and you need to upgrade them. Well, you've got to be able to also get a good education. So that's why we're putting more money into community colleges as well as 4-year colleges. And what we've done is we've expanded the grant programs, the Pell grant, the student loan programs, so that more people can afford to go to college without getting huge debt, especially if you're working. And if you've already got a family, you can't afford to be taking out $50,000 worth of debt. So we want to give you more help.

Now, this is a good place to just talk, again, about this budget debate, because you're going to be hearing a lot about this. Right now we're debating last year's budget, and we may have a Government shutdown, and then we're going to have to debate next year's budget. All of us think that the Government should live within its means. We all believe that. You do it in your families. Government should have to do the same thing. And there is some waste in Government.

And so we've been cutting in a whole bunch of areas, and we're consolidating some agencies and earmarks that are not necessary, and we're looking at the Pentagon—how do we make our defense spending smarter and better? And so we're going to be doing a lot of consolidation and cuts, but one thing we can't do is stop investing in education, in research, in infrastructure, in things like a smart grid. Those are the things that are going to make us competitive over the long term.

So if you see me getting in some arguments in Washington, I want you to be clear. Don't believe that somehow the argument is about whether we should cut or not. I've already said we've got to cut spending. I just want to make sure we're cutting the right things. Don't protect things we don't need and get rid of things that we do. That's my basic attitude.

All right. I have time for one more question, and I'll call on that young lady back there.

Energy Efficiency

Q. Mr. President, given that energy efficiency is the cleanest, safest, cheapest, and most labor-intensive energy resource, what else—what more can the Federal Government do that is revenue neutral to support the growth of the energy efficiency industry?

The President. Well, first of all, I want you to know that you are absolutely right. The first

thing we can do to improve our economy, and our environment at the same time, and can actually produce a lot of jobs, is to make everything we do more efficient. That's sort of the low-hanging fruit. We use huge amounts of energy because our buildings aren't well insulated or the lighting that we use is old-fashioned or the heating—the HVAC systems, the heating and cooling systems—are inefficient. So what we've said is, why not provide incentives to both businesses and homeowners to make your home or your business more energy efficient, because you'll get the money back. It will pay for itself, because your electricity bills will go down.

But the only problem is, a lot of folks, they need a little bit of money up front to get started. I mean, I'll bet a lot of folks here—anybody recently reinsulated their house or put in new windows or something? Gentleman right here. And how long ago did you do it? A few months ago? Are you already seeing a drop in your electricity bill? You are, right?

So—but you had those upfront costs that you had to deal with. Right? And so the question is, you may not have initially the couple thousand bucks out of pocket to be able to do it. Now, this guy looks like he's pretty handy, so he might have done it himself, right? But I would have gotten a nail in my thumb or something, because I'm challenged in those ways. So I might have had to hire somebody.

But the point though is, is that that money up front—if we can give you a tax break to do it initially, you're going to get that money back. And if you're not somebody who can do it yourself, you're going to hire somebody. And that now is creating a job in a whole bunch of new industries for people who are doing energy efficiency.

So I already mentioned how we're trying to provide incentives for cleaner cars and more energy-efficient transportation sectors. I think the next big challenge are commercial buildings and homeowners, giving them incentives to make these investments. It's a win-win situation for everybody.

So all right, well, listen, Gamesa, it was wonderful to be with all of you. I'm proud of what you're doing. As I said before, just in closing, we've gone through a very tough couple of years. And I'm not going to guarantee standing here that suddenly, every single challenge we have is going to go away overnight. And if somebody promises you that, they're not telling the truth.

Gas prices, they're going to still fluctuate until we can start making these broader changes. And that's going to take a couple of years to have serious effect. Not everybody is going to be able to remodel or insulate their homes right away. But slowly we can get more and more homes and more and more buildings doing it.

If we get a clean energy standard, then Gamesa is going to have more customers. It's not going to immediately transform the wind industry, but it's going to make it that much stronger. And I'll bet that the leaders of your company will start hiring some more people because there will be greater demand.

And day by day, week by week, year by year, we slowly make more and more progress. On education, we're not going to transform all the schools overnight. Too many kids are going to be dropping out. Too many kids are going to be ranking too low on international standards on math and science. But if we improve those schools each year, then slowly but surely our whole workforce gets better.

We're not going to eliminate the debt that's built up overnight. But if each year we're making good choices, we're investing in those things that we need, not investing in those things that we don't, then the debt will come down. That's how progress is made.

In our own individual lives, whether it's trying to build a career or raise your kids or getting exercise, it starts a step at a time. And then slowly you make progress. And then a year, 2 years, 5 years later you look back and you said, you know what, I'm in a better place now. The country is the same way.

So we've got to have a vision for how we're going to win the future. We've got to be persistent about it. We've got to be steady about it. But we have to also have confidence. America has always been able to make the changes that it needs to. And I have every bit

of confidence we're going to be able to do that again this time out. And we're going to do it partly because of the great workers at places like Gamesa.

So thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to T. Boone Pickens, founder, BP Capital, L.P.; and Treasury Department Senior Adviser for Auto Issues Ron A. Bloom, in his capacity as Senior Counselor to the President for Manufacturing Policy.

Remarks at the National Action Network's Keepers of the Dream Awards Gala in New York City
April 6, 2011

Well, thank you. It's good to be in New York City. Let me begin by acknowledging some very, very special guests: Dr. Richardson, thank you; Charlie Rangel, for your outstanding work on behalf of your constituents; Mayor David Dinkins. Governor David Paterson is here; State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli—DiNapoli, excuse me; this is another one that's hard to pronounce—Stevie Wonder—[*laughter*]; Martin Luther King III; all the Keepers of the Dream honorees with us tonight; and the National Action Network.

It is wonderful to be here as you celebrate your 20th anniversary. Some things have changed a lot since 1991. I told Reverend Al backstage, he's getting skinnier than me. [*Laughter*] He's getting skinnier than Spike. [*Laughter*] But he hasn't lost his sense of style. The other thing that hasn't changed is the National Action Network's commitment to fight injustice and inequality here in New York City and across America. And that's not only a testament to Reverend Sharpton, it's a testament to all of you who are here tonight. I want to commend you for the work that you've done over the last two decades to lift up not only the African American community, but the broader American family. That's what you're about.

The last time I came was in April of 2007, 4 months ago—4 years ago this month. Back then, I had fewer supporters. Most of you couldn't pronounce my name, so Tom, don't feel bad. [*Laughter*] I had a lot fewer gray hairs. I was looking at some pictures; I looked really young back then. [*Laughter*] I said that we were facing extraordinary challenges in this country, but that what was stopping us from solving them wasn't a lack of policies. It wasn't a lack of plans. What was stopping us was a broken politics, a broken politics in Washington, a politics that was all about the next election instead of the next generation, that was all about what we disagreed about instead of what we had in common, a politics that made us cynical about our ability to change this country.

And I said that if you stand with me and believe in what we can do together, if you do what civil rights groups like the National Action Network have always done, if you put your shoulder to the wheel of history, then we can move this country toward the promise of a better day. I told you at the time I wasn't a perfect person, I wouldn't be a perfect President, but what I could commit to was always telling you the truth, even when it was hard, and that I would spend each and every day thinking about you.

And because you made our campaign your own, because you believed in our ability to shape our own destiny, we won that chance to bring about real change. And I said on Inauguration night in Chicago that that was simply the end of the beginning and that now the real business started.

Because I didn't run, and so many of you didn't support me, just to win an election; we won the election so that we could then actually get moving on all the work that had been left undone. Even though we understood, of course, the magnitudes of the challenges we faced, we didn't fully realize until late in the game, probably in the last month of the campaign, that we would be facing the worst recession in generations, a recession that was

leaving millions of Americans without a home, without a job, without hope for the future. And as Reverend Al said, some folks have amnesia about this.

Where are we 2 years later? Our economy has started to grow again. The recovery is gaining momentum. People are finally starting to get hired back. We had to make some tough choices in between. You remember when we decided we had to move to save the American auto industry and everybody said, that can't happen. And then 2 weeks ago, GM just announced that it's going to hire back every single worker that has been laid off, and every U.S. automaker is making a profit. But that wasn't popular. That wasn't popular.

A while back, I visited a small trucking business, and its owner Stephen Neal is one of our country's African American business leaders. And he told me that because of the uptick in our economy, he was buying new equipment and adding more workers. And that's what's happening all across America. In the first 3 months of this year, we've added nearly half a million private sector jobs, nearly 2 million jobs in the last 13 months.

So we're making progress, but we're not there yet. And I want you to know that so long as there are Americans who cannot find work, I will be fighting for jobs, and so long as the gap between the wealthiest few and everybody else keeps on growing, I will be fighting for opportunity. And I know you'll be right there alongside with me.

We are going to keep fighting until every family gets a shot at the American Dream. That's our north star. That's the first thing I think about when I wake up in the morning, that's the last thing I think about when I go to bed at night: the hopes and dreams of people who work hard every single day, look after their families, take care of their responsibilities, and just need a little bit of help to make it.

Now, there are Americans of all colors and creeds who are struggling to live out those dreams today. That's part of what our campaign was about, was reminding ourselves that everybody is in this together. Now, what's also true, though, is the unemployment rate for African Americans is almost double what it is for other groups. It's also true that those with the least have been sacrificing the most during this recession. What's also true is that even before the recession hit, too many communities were marked by structural inequalities in health and education and employment that made it profoundly difficult for too many people to get ahead.

You understood that. I understood that. That's part of the reason I ran for President, because I've seen the frustration and the wounded pride in the eyes of folks who've lost their jobs or a father who has to go home and tell his kids that we might not have enough this month, might be losing our apartment this month. I've heard the stories of struggling families who are doing everything right and still, at the end of the month, don't quite have enough to pay the bills. I did not start hearing those stories when I became President. Those are stories that led me to run for President in the first place.

As Reverend mentioned, I got my start tackling the problems of joblessness and hopelessness that afflict so many of our cities and rural communities. I got my start working to bring opportunity to neighborhoods that were full of boarded up houses and shuttered stores, fighting to keep kids off the street, fighting to get them into school, fighting to make sure that they went on to college, fighting to make real the promise of justice in our judicial system.

And these causes of justice and equality and opportunity, they aren't just what led me into politics, they're what led ordinary people to sit down at the front of the bus, to cross that bridge in Selma, to heed a King's call to perfect our Union. They're the heart of what makes us Americans. That's who we are. And because of your support, they're the causes that I've been carrying since I've been in the Oval Office.

With the help of folks at the grassroots, we passed historic health insurance reform that will not only extend coverage to 30 million more Americans and give Americans more affordable choices, but will narrow the cruel health disparities between African Americans

of different backgrounds. That was because of your work.

We passed Wall Street reform that will protect consumers from the kind of predatory lending practices that helped cause this recession. We're rewarding work with an expanded earned-income tax credit. We're tackling poverty with Promise Neighborhoods that build on the great work of Geoffrey Canada up in Harlem. We're making sure our civil rights and antidiscrimination laws are enforced. And if you're interested in learning more, if you want to spread the word about what we're doing not just in the African American community, but all across the country, go to our web site and it will give you a long list of what we've done over the last 2 years, promises made and promises kept.

That's what we've tried to do over these past couple years: advance the causes that make us who we are. But we've still got more work to do. If we're serious about opening up opportunity and making sure America prospers in the 21st century, we're going to have to up our game as a nation. I was talking to Magic right before we came out. I was talking about the Bulls of course. [*Laughter*] He's still picking the Lakers. But he made the point, a young man, Derrick Rose, upped his game, worked hard, and is having an MVP season. Well, we have to do that in classrooms. We have to do that in the workplaces. We've got to do that in our communities and our neighborhoods. Our fathers got to up their games.

If we want to attract new jobs and new opportunities to our shores, we've got to make sure America can outcompete the rest of the world. That's what we mean when we say we got to win the future. It means we got to rebuild our crumbling transportation networks with high-speed rail, upgrade our communications networks with high-speed Internet. It means we're investing in cutting-edge research and technology like clean energy and, most of all, making sure we are giving every one of our children the best possible education. The best possible education is the single most important factor in determining whether they succeed, but it's also what will determine whether we succeed. It's the key to opportunity. It is the civil rights issue of our time.

I know education is important to everybody here, especially Reverend Al. In fact, a while back, he stopped by the White House to talk about education. He was joined by the great mayor of this city, Mike Bloomberg. He was also joined by Newt Gingrich. Newt—hmm. [*Laughter*] Newt said he and Reverend Sharpton were the original odd couple. That's an understatement. [*Laughter*]

But I welcomed them to the White House because I don't think there's anything odd about the two of them coming together around the importance of education. When there is an achievement gap between students of different races and backgrounds, that's not a Democratic problem, that's not a Republican problem, that is an American problem that we have to address. When too many of our schools are failing our children, too many of our kids are dropping out of school, that's not a Black or a White or a Brown problem, that is an American problem. We're going to have to solve that problem. We are all responsible for the education of all of our children.

That starts with parents making sure that we're doing right at home, staying engaged in our child's education, setting high expectation. Without parental responsibility, nothing else we do will matter. But we also know that each of us has a responsibility not just as parents, but as civic leaders, as Americans, to do a better job of educating our children.

And that's why 2 years ago, we started something called Race for the Top. We're saying to States, prove you are serious about improving education—not just for some kids, but for all kids—and if you do, we will show you the money. And for less than 1 percent of what our country as a whole spends on education each year, Race to the Top has led 40 States to raise their standards for teaching and learning and student achievement and developed plans for some of the schools that are underperforming the worst. And all this was done not in Washington, it was developed by Republican and Democratic Governors across the country.

We're going to have to take that same approach when it comes to fixing No Child Left Behind. Instead of measuring students based on whether they're above or below some arbitrary test, we need to make sure our students are graduating from high school ready to—for a career, ready for college. That's what we need to do. Instead of labeling our schools a failure one day and then throwing up our hands and walking away, we've got to refocus on the schools that need help the most. In the 21st century, it's not enough to just leave no child left behind, we've got to help every child get ahead. That's our goal: We've got to get every child on a path to academic excellence.

And we need to make sure that that path leads to a college degree. That's why we ended a system where we were subsidizing banks in the student loan program. They were taking billions of dollars out of the student loan program. We said, why don't we give that to the students directly? That would make sense. So we made college more affordable for millions of students. Millions of students across the country are now getting student loans that they weren't getting before and more loans than they were getting before. That's why we're making it easier to repay student loans, so kids don't graduate, like Michelle and I did, with massive loan payments each month. It was more than our mortgage for 10 years.

It's one of the things I try to remember—I try to remind people when they say, well, you're President now, you're out of touch. I said, listen, it was only a few years ago I was still paying off my student loans. [*Laughter*] And it's true, I don't pump gas now, but I remember what it was like pumping gas. [*Laughter*] I remember. I remember the end of the month. [*Laughter*] I remember that. We appreciate all of you buying the book—[*laughter*]—Michelle and I. [*Laughter*] That's the college fund right there. [*Laughter*] That was not a given.

That's why we're reinvesting in Historically Black Colleges and Universities. That's why we are—[*applause*]—that's why we're upgrading our community colleges that prepare so many working families to succeed in this economy. And by taking all these steps, I'm confident we are going to meet a goal that I set when I took office that I announced in my first State of the Union: By the end of this decade, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. That is something that we can achieve. That's something we can achieve.

That's how we can outeducate countries around the world. That's how we will outcompete. That's how we will win the future in the 21st century.

Now, one thing we won't be able to win is—if some of our people are falling behind, we will not win the future. The only way for America to prosper is for all Americans to prosper. We've seen that in the census that just came out. The face of America is changing. You can't get away with having a third of our children, half of our children not doing well. Not today, not in the 21st century. All of us—Black, White, Latino, Native American, Asian American, men, women, disabled, nondisabled—in America, we rise and fall together.

An America where the American Dream is within reach of everybody, that's what we've been fighting to build over the last 2 years. That's what the National Action Network has been fighting to build over the past two decades. I know that there are times where the work is frustrating. I know there are times where it is hard. There are times when change can seem painfully slow to come by. There are times where some of you may have said, "You know, I don't know what Obama is doing there." There are times where you lose hope, times when folks in Washington focus on scoring points instead of solving problems. And some of you may just put up your hands and say, "Politics is too tough."

But in those moments when we start asking ourselves if change is possible, you've got to remember what we've done together over the past few years. Remember all the children who will graduate from high school ready for college and beyond. Remember all the Americans who will no longer have to worry about going bankrupt because they got sick. Remember all the families who will no longer be exploited by

insurance companies or a credit card company or a mortgage lender.

I'm not asking you to think about what we've already done so you can be satisfied with our progress. I know this isn't the National Satisfaction Network. This is the National Action Network. [*Laughter*] But I am asking you to draw inspiration from the fact that we know change is possible. I am living testament that change is possible. We know we have the ability to put our shoulders to the wheel of history and steer America towards the promise of a better day. We know that we stand on others' shoulders, and step by step, inch by inch, we make progress.

That's what we've been doing. And if you're as committed as I am to continuing to change this country for the better, if you feel the same determination that I do to tackle the problems that we haven't yet met, if you're still willing to believe in what we can do together, I am absolutely confident we will do what you've been doing for the last 20 years. We will build an America where the ideals of justice and equality and opportunity are alive and well, and we will reclaim the American Dream in our time.

So thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:01 p.m. in the Metropolitan Ballroom at the Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers. In his remarks, he referred to W. Franklyn Richardson, chairman of the board, and Alfred C. Sharpton, Jr., president and founder, National Action Network; former Mayor David N. Dinkins of New York City; former Gov. David A. Paterson of New York; musician Stevie Wonder; film director Spike Lee; Stephen W. Neal, president and chief executive officer, K. Neal International Trucks, Inc.; Geoffrey Canada, president and chief executive officer, Harlem Children's Zone; Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Jr., former guard, National Basketball Association's Los Angeles Lakers; Derrick M. Rose, guard, NBA's Chicago Bulls; and former Speaker of the House of Representatives Newton L. Gingrich.

Remarks on the Federal Budget
April 6, 2011

Good evening, everybody. I'm going to just have a few quick remarks.

We just had a productive meeting with Speaker Boehner, as well as Majority Leader Reid. We discussed the impasse that we're currently at with respect to the budget, and I thought the meetings were frank, they were constructive, and what they did was narrow the issues and clarify the issues that are still outstanding.

I remain confident that if we're serious about getting something done we should be able to complete a deal and get it passed and avert a shutdown. But it's going to require a sufficient sense of urgency from all parties involved. It means that people have to recognize that a Government shutdown has real consequences for real people.

There was a interview that was done tonight on one of the nightly news networks, a man from Kentucky named J.T. Henderson. He said he's counting on his tax rebate because his family has been scraping by, and he might not get it if the Government shuts down. So J.T. said if he could speak directly to all of us in Washington he'd tell us that all of this political grandstanding has effects as it trickles down to normal, everyday Americans.

I could not have said it better myself. A shutdown could have real effects on everyday Americans. That means that small-business owners who are counting on that loan to open their business, to make payroll, to expand, suddenly, they can't do it. It means folks who are potentially processing a mortgage, they may not be able to get it. It means that hundreds of thousands of workers across the country suddenly are without a paycheck. Their families are counting on them being able to go to work and do a good job.

There are ramifications all across this economy. And at a time when the economy is as—is

still coming out of an extraordinarily deep recession, it would be inexcusable, given the relatively narrow differences when it comes to numbers between the two parties, that we can't get this done.

So my expectation is that folks are going to work through the night. In the morning I will check in with the respective staffs of the Speaker and the majority leader, as well as my team here. If we haven't made progress, we're going to go back at it again. And we're going to keep on pounding away at this thing because I'm absolutely convinced that we can get this done.

There is no reason why we should not be able to complete a deal. There is no reason why we should have a Government shutdown, unless we've made a decision that politics is more important than folks like J.T. Henderson.

That's not why we we're elected. That's not why we were sent here. And I want to meet the expectations of the American people in terms of delivering for them.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia
April 7, 2011

President Obama. It is my great pleasure to welcome President Santos and the rest of the delegation from Colombia here to the White House.

I had the pleasure of meeting President Santos shortly after he was elected, on the sidelines of meetings at the United Nations, and we are now continuing our conversation.

The United States has an enormous interest in the development of Latin America and an enormous interest in progress in Colombia. We have been a partner there as Colombia dealt with some very difficult times and has now blossomed into a strong democracy that is respectful of human rights and is moving forward vigorously to provide economic opportunity for all of its people.

President Santos, I think, is at the forefront of a progressive and thoughtful agenda within Colombia. He's obviously initiating a whole range of reforms. Colombia is also a leader when it comes to security in the region, and we are glad that we've been able to partner with Colombia not only to deal with security situations inside Colombia, but now increasingly Colombia can be a role model for the rest of the region.

And I just realized I was going to have translation, so let me stop there, and then we can continue.

In short, Colombia is one of our strongest partners not only in the region, but around the world. And when we met in September, I suggested to President Santos that we should do even more to deepen and strengthen our relationship. And in pursuit of that deepening relationship, I dispatched my team to Colombia to discuss how we can finally move forward on trade agreements between our two countries.

So today I am very pleased to announce that we have developed an action plan for labor rights in Colombia, consistent with our values and interests, but more importantly, consistent with President Santos's vision of a just and equitable society inside of Colombia. And we believe that this serves as a basis for us moving forward on a U.S.-Colombia free trade agreement.

Now, there's obviously a lot of work to do to translate this action plan into reality. And we are going to continue to engage with President Santos and his administration in an active process to ensure good working conditions, to make sure that trade unionists are protected, to make sure that we're creating a level of playing field for business and workers here and around the world.

And so I very much appreciate President Santos's efforts. He emphasized to me how important this is to him personally and the fact that Colombia sees a vision for its country in which all workers are treated fairly. And I have great confidence in his ability to be able to execute on this plan, and we look forward to working with him on it.

Now, obviously, the United States represents an important market for Colombian businesses, and so this is going to be a win for Colombia. It's also a win for the United States. This represents a potential $1 billion of exports, and it could mean thousands of jobs for workers here in the United States. And so I believe that we can structure a trade agreement that is a win-win for both our countries, and I'm looking forward to working with President Santos to ensure that both countries benefit. And this will help me meet my goal of making sure the United States has doubled exports over the coming years and that we're as competitive as we can be in a global marketplace in the 21st century.

Finally, let me just say that President Santos obviously has strong connections with the United States and particularly with the Kansas Jayhawks. [*Laughter*] We were both disappointed that Kansas did not go all the way, but President Santos assures me that there's always next year. [*Laughter*]

And so I appreciate President Santos not only for having faith in my bracket, but also having faith in the strong relationship and friendship between the United States and Colombia.

And I am looking forward to visiting Colombia next year for the Summit of the Americas, in which I think, under President Santos's leadership, I'm confident we'll be able to do a lot of work to strengthen relations with all the countries in the hemisphere.

So, President Santos, welcome.

His English is better than mine, but he may decide to present in Spanish and have it translated to English so he can speak to his people back home.

Thank you.

President Santos. Well, I'm going to be speaking in Spanish because I'd like to have all of my countrymen in Colombia able to hear me.

First of all, I want to thank President Obama very deeply. I want to thank him personally, and I also want to thank him on behalf of the Colombian people and thank his administration for welcoming us to the White House and to the United States at this time. I know it's a very intense political time for you, so I thank you very specially.

We met back in September, as the President said, and we decided then that we wanted to strengthen our relationship and we wanted to broaden our relationship. And I think that since then we've made good progress. And within that progress that I've referred to, the most important thing for Colombia, of course, is the good news that we've had with regard to the free trade agreement today. We've been working on getting a green light for this to go to Congress for 5 years, and we got that green light today.

This is a very important event for Colombia. It's important not just because of our foreign trade, but also because of our relationship with the United States and for the progress and development of Colombia. We're extremely pleased as a result, because this is part of the development plan that we're working on for Colombia to achieve development and even better progress with social justice.

And President Obama and I share common values—values having to do with democracy, the progressive ideas that we share—and this event takes us one step further in the defense of those values. The free trade agreement for Colombia means more jobs; it means more trade, more investment, more prosperity as a result. But the same is true for the United States. The United States has been losing markets in Colombia because of the free trade agreements that we have already signed with other nations. Now that relationship is going to become more balanced and the trade balance between us is going to be corrected.

The action plan that is giving the green light to the free trade agreement is one that establishes stronger defense of workers—physical defense of workers. And in it, we put down in

black and white objectives and, along with those objectives, a date for each one.

The first date we have set forth is April 22. April 22 is going to carry with it a series of commitments with regard to worker protections, worker rights, the strengthening of justice. And so we are going to start off on April 22 with making a presentation to Congress.

And so a number of measures are going to be taken after that with regard to objectives having to do with democracy, where the rights of all, and especially the rights of workers, are going to be guaranteed and protected. This important step is going to strengthen our democracy, and it's going to restrengthen the capacity that we have to defend our workers' rights.

And finally, the President and I had an opportunity to touch on the other issues on the agenda that we share. Opening up the way for the free trade agreement allows us to take our strategic relationship even further. We discussed things like the upcoming Summit of the Americas, which is going to be hosted by Colombia in April of 2012, in the city of Cartagena.

We talked about how we will work together to follow up on President Obama's historic Latin America visit, a visit in which in his speech he presented an outline of how the United States will be working with Latin America. And we want to take specific actions now on Latin America and the United States in the relationship that they will be developing in the future.

As you know, the United States has a growing Hispanic population. This is a very important link with Latin America, and we want to strengthen it even more.

Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:18 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Santos spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the 17th Anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda
April 7, 2011

Seventeen years ago today, the world watched as an unimaginable slaughter began to unfold in Rwanda. One hundred horrific days later, more than 800,000 innocent people—men, women, and children—lay dead in one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century. Today we join the Rwandan people in honoring the memory of the loved ones they lost so senselessly, and we reaffirm the lessons of that tragic chapter in history. For just as the Rwandan genocide exposed man's capacity for evil, it also revealed man's capacity for good: courageous Rwandans who risked their lives to save friends and neighbors from the massacre. As an international community, we must summon the same courage to ensure that such mass atrocities and genocides never happen again.

Today we also reflect on Rwanda's progress. Out of the ruins of genocide, Rwandans have welcomed home refugees and former combatants and worked to build a more peaceful, prosperous, and democratic society for all it citizens. And as a leading contributor to peacekeeping missions around the world, Rwanda reminds us of our obligations to each other as fellow human beings and our shared responsibility to prevent attacks on innocent civilians, as the international community is doing today in Libya. As they reflect on this painful day, Rwandans must know that the United States will be their partner in pursuit of the secure and peaceful future that they and their children deserve.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Somalia
April 7, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13536 of April 12, 2010, is to continue in effect beyond April 12, 2011.

The deterioration of the security situation and the persistence of violence in Somalia, and acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, which have repeatedly been the subject of United Nations Security Council resolutions, and violations of the Somalia arms embargo imposed by the United Nations Security Council, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to Somalia and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Somalia.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
April 7, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Federal Budget
April 7, 2011

I just completed another meeting with Speaker Boehner and Leader Reid, and I wanted to report again to the American people that we made some additional progress this evening. I think the staffs of both the House and the Senate, as well as the White House staff, have been working very hard to try to narrow the differences. We made some progress today. Those differences have been narrowed. And so once again the staff is going to be working tonight around the clock in order to see if we can finally close a deal.

But there is still a few issues that are outstanding. They're difficult issues. They're important to both sides. And so I'm not yet prepared to express wild optimism. But I think we are further along today than we were yesterday.

I want to reiterate to people why this is so important. We're now less than 30 hours away from the Government shutting down. That means, first of all, 800,000 families, our neighbors, our friends, who are working hard all across the country in a whole variety of functions, they suddenly are not allowed to come to work. It also means that they're not getting a paycheck. That obviously has a tremendous impact.

You then have millions more people who end up being impacted because they're not getting the services from the Federal Government that are important to them. So small businesses aren't seeing their loans processed. Folks who want to get a mortgage through the FHA may not be able to get it, and obviously, that's not good as weak as this housing market is. You've got people who are trying to get a passport for a trip that they've been planning for a long time; they may not be able to do that. So millions more people will be significantly inconvenienced; in some ways, they may end

up actually seeing money lost or opportunities lost because of a Government shutdown.

And then finally, there's going to be an effect on the economy overall. Earlier today one of our Nation's top economists said, and I'm quoting here: "The economic damage from a Government shutdown would mount very quickly, and the longer it dragged on, the greater the odds of a renewed recession."

We've been working very hard over the last 2 years to get this economy back on its feet. We've now seen 13 months of job growth; a hundred—1.8 million new jobs. We had the best report—jobs report that we'd seen in a very long time just this past Friday. For us to go backwards because Washington couldn't get its act together is unacceptable.

So again, 800,000 Federal workers and their families impacted, millions of people who are reliant on Government services not getting those services, businesses, farmers, veterans, and finally, overall impact on the economy that could end up severely hampering our recovery and our ability to put people back to work.

That's what's at stake. That's why it's important to the American people. That's why I'm expecting that as a consequence of the good work that's done by our staffs tonight, that we can reach an agreement tomorrow.

But let me just point out one last thing. What I've said to the Speaker and what I've said to Harry Reid is because the machinery of the shutdown is necessarily starting to move, I expect an answer in the morning. And my hope is, is that I'll be able to announce to the American people sometime relatively early in the day that a shutdown has been averted, that a deal has been completed that has very meaningful cuts in a wide variety of categories that helps us move in the direction of living within our means, but preserves our investments in things like education and innovation, research, that are going to be important for our long-term competitiveness.

That's what I hope to be able to announce tomorrow. There's no certainty yet, but I expect an answer sometime early in the day.

All right. Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:33 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House.

Statement on the First Anniversary of the Death of President Lech Kaczynski of Poland and His Delegation
April 8, 2011

As the people of Poland mark 1 year since the tragic deaths of President Lech Kaczynski, First Lady Maria Kaczynska, and their delegation, I join with the American people, including many Polish Americans, in honoring the memory of these 96 Polish patriots. The images of the wreckage in Smolensk and the loss of so many extraordinary civilian and military leaders who guided Poland to democracy and prosperity broke our hearts. But it was the inspiring scenes of people coming together in streets filled with candles and flowers, both in Poland and the United States, that revealed the true strength, resilience, and faith of the Polish spirit, as well as the unbreakable bonds between our two countries. Poland is one of America's strongest and closest allies, and I look forward to deepening these enduring ties and carrying on the work of those who perished 1 year ago this Sunday, when I visit Warsaw next month.

Statement on the Situation in Syria
April 8, 2011

I strongly condemn the abhorrent violence committed against peaceful protesters by the Syrian Government today and over the past few weeks. I also condemn any use of violence by protesters. The United States extends our condolences to the families and loved ones of

all the victims. I call upon the Syrian authorities to refrain from any further violence against peaceful protestors. Furthermore, the arbitrary arrests, detention, and torture of prisoners that has been reported must end now, and the free flow of information must be permitted so that there can be independent verification of events on the ground.

Throughout this time of upheaval, the American people have heard the voices of the Syrian people, who have demonstrated extraordinary courage and dignity and who deserve a government that is responsive to their aspirations. Syrians have called for the freedoms that individuals around the world should enjoy: freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly; confidence in the rule of law and the equal administration of justice; and a government that is transparent and free of corruption. These rights are universal, and they must be respected in Syria.

Until now, the Syrian Government has not addressed the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. Violence and detention are not the answer to the grievances of the Syrian people. It is time for the Syrian Government to stop repressing its citizens and to listen to the voices of the Syrian people calling for meaningful political and economic reforms.

Remarks on the Federal Budget
April 8, 2011

Good evening. Behind me, through the window, you can see the Washington Monument, visited each year by hundreds of thousands from around the world. The people who travel here come to learn about our history and to be inspired by the example of our democracy, a place where citizens of different backgrounds and beliefs can still come together as one Nation.

Tomorrow I'm pleased to announce that the Washington Monument, as well as the entire Federal Government, will be open for business. And that's because today Americans of different beliefs came together again.

In the final hours before our Government would have been forced to shut down, leaders in both parties reached an agreement that will allow our small businesses to get the loans they need, our families to get the mortgages they applied for, and hundreds of thousands of Americans to show up at work and take home their paychecks on time, including our brave men and women in uniform.

This agreement between Democrats and Republicans, on behalf of all Americans, is on a budget that invests in our future while making the largest annual spending cut in our history. Like any worthwhile compromise, both sides had to make tough decisions and give ground on issues that were important to them. And I certainly did that.

Some of the cuts we agreed to will be painful. Programs people rely on will be cut back. Needed infrastructure projects will be delayed. And I would not have made these cuts in better circumstances.

But beginning to live within our means is the only way to protect those investments that will help America compete for new jobs: investments in our kids' education and student loans, in clean energy and lifesaving medical research. We protected the investments we need to win the future.

At the same time, we also made sure that at the end of the day, this was a debate about spending cuts, not social issues like women's health and the protection of our air and water. These are important issues that deserve discussion, just not during a debate about our budget.

I want to think Speaker Boehner and Senator Reid for their leadership and their dedication during this process. A few months ago, I was able to sign a tax cut for American families because both parties worked through their differences and found common ground. Now the same cooperation will make possible the biggest annual spending cut in history, and it's my sincere hope that we can continue to come together as we face the many difficult challenges that lie ahead, from creating jobs and growing our economy to educating our children and reducing

our deficit. That's what the American people expect us to do. That's why they sent us here.

A few days ago, I received a letter from a mother in Longmont, Colorado. Over the year, her son's eighth grade class saved up money and worked on projects so that next week they could take a class trip to Washington, DC. They even have an appointment to lay a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The mother wrote that for the last few days the kids in her son's class had been worried and upset that they might have to cancel their trip because of a shutdown. She asked those of us in Washington to get past our petty grievances and make things right. And she said: "Remember, the future of this country is not for us. It's for our children."

Today we acted on behalf of our children's future. And next week, when 50 eighth graders from Colorado arrive in our Nation's Capital, I hope they get a chance to look up at the Washington Monument and feel the sense of pride and possibility that defines America, a land of many that has always found a way to move forward as one.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:04 p.m. in the Blue Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Shalini Schane and her son Adam.

The President's Weekly Address
April 9, 2011

Last night, after weeks of long and difficult negotiations over our national budget, leaders of both parties came together to avert a Government shutdown, cut spending, and invest in our future.

This is good news for the American people. It means that small businesses can get the loans they need, our families can get the mortgages they applied for, folks can visit our national museums and parks, and hundreds of thousands of Americans will get their paychecks on time, including our brave men and women in uniform.

This is an agreement to invest in our country's future while making the largest annual spending cut in our history. Like any compromise, this required everyone to give ground on issues that were important to them; I certainly did. Some of the cuts we agreed to will be painful. Programs people rely on will be cut back; needed infrastructure projects will be delayed. And I would not have made these cuts in better circumstances. But we also prevented this important debate from being overtaken by politics and unrelated disagreements on social issues. And beginning to live within our means is the only way to protect the investments that will help America compete for new jobs: investments in our kids' education and student loans, in clean energy and lifesaving medical research.

Reducing spending while still investing in the future is just common sense. That's what families do in tough times. They sacrifice where they can, even if it's hard, to afford what's really important.

A few months ago, I was able to sign a tax cut for American families because both parties worked through their differences and found common ground. Now, the same cooperation has made it possible for us to move forward with the biggest annual spending cut in history. And it's my sincere hope that we can continue to come together as we face the many difficult challenges that lie ahead, from creating jobs and growing our economy to educating our children and reducing our long-term deficits.

That's our responsibility. That's what the American people expect us to do, and it's what the American people deserve.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:15 p.m. on April 8 in the Red Room at the White House for broadcast on April 9. In

the address, the President referred to Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid; and Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 8, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 9.

Statement on the Situation in Cote d'Ivoire
April 11, 2011

The United States welcomes the decisive turn of events in Cote d'Ivoire, as former President Laurent Gbagbo's illegitimate claim to power has finally come to an end. This represents a victory for the democratic will of the Ivoirian people, who have suffered for far too long through the instability that followed their election. Today the people of Cote d'Ivoire have the chance to begin to reclaim their country, solidify their democracy, and rebuild a vibrant economy that taps the extraordinary potential of the Ivoirian people.

In the 4 months that have passed since Alassane Ouattara was elected President, the United States and international community have strongly supported the results of Cote d'Ivoire's democratic election and the right of the Ivoirian people to determine their own destiny. These results came after several years of support by the international community for Cote d'Ivoire's peace and democratic processes. The United Nations Security Council, members of the African Union, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have all worked to advance the goal of a democratic Cote d'Ivoire in which the rule of the people is stronger than the rule of one man. The United States commends the United Nations operation in Cote d'Ivoire and French forces for the actions that they have taken to protect civilians.

For President Ouattara and the people of Cote d'Ivoire, the hard work of reconciliation and rebuilding must begin now. President Ouattara will need to govern on behalf of all the people of Cote d'Ivoire, including those who did not vote for him. All militia groups should lay down their weapons and recognize an inclusive military that protects all citizens under the authority of President Ouattara. The victims and survivors of violence deserve accountability for the violence and crimes that have been committed against them. The international community must continue to support the people of Cote d'Ivoire as they turn the page to a more hopeful and democratic future. In that effort, a democratic Cote d'Ivoire that respects the rights of its people will always have a friend in the United States of America.

Statement on the Death of Kam T. Kuwata
April 11, 2011

I was saddened to learn of the passing of my friend Kam Kuwata. Kam's brilliance as a political strategist was matched by his passion for our country and the process by which we govern ourselves. I'll never forget the critical contribution Kam made to our efforts in 2008, planning an open, vibrant convention that really captured the spirit of our campaign. Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to Kam's extended family of friends and to so many in California who mourn his passing.

Remarks Announcing the Joining Forces Initiative To Support Military Families

April 12, 2011

Thank you very much. Well, as you can see, the Vice President and I are the warmup acts here today. [*Laughter*] Our role is to introduce our better halves. Actually, Michelle and Jill are, like, our better three-quarters or four-fifths. They're basically just all around better. [*Laughter*]

So thank you, Jill, for your introduction and sharing your personal experiences and stories and being able to describe how much this means to you personally; to the Vice President, the entire family, which, like so many others, has known both the pride, but also the worries and the fears when a loved one in uniform is serving in harm's way.

We are joined today by Members of Congress, by members of my Cabinet, Joint Chiefs, by leaders across the administration and just about every sector of American society. But most of all, we're joined by our servicemembers and their families, representing the finest military that the world has ever known.

And while the campaign that brings us all together is truly unique, it does reflect a spirit that's familiar to all of us, the spirit that has defined us as a people and as a nation for more than two centuries: Freedom is not free, simple words that we know are true. For 234 years, our freedom has been paid by the service and sacrifice of those who've stepped forward, raised their hand, and said, "Send me." They put on a uniform. They swear an oath to protect and defend. And they carry titles that have commanded the respect of generations: soldiers, airmen, marine, sailor, coastguardsman. Our Nation endures because these men and women are willing to defend it with their very lives. And as a nation, it is our solemn duty and our moral obligation to serve these patriots as well as they serve us.

But we are here today because these Americans in uniform have never served alone: not at Lexington, not at Concord, not in Iraq, not in Afghanistan. Behind every American in uniform stands a wife, a husband, a mom, a dad, a son or a daughter, a sister or brother. These families—these remarkable families—are the force behind the Force. They too are the reason we've got the finest military in the world.

Whenever I'm with our troops overseas, when I ask them, "What can we do for you?" there's one thing they request more than anything else: "Take care of my family." Take care of my family. Because when our troops are worried about their families back home, it's harder for them to focus on the mission overseas. The strength and the readiness of America's military depends on the strength and readiness of our military families. This is a matter of national security. It's not just the right thing to do, it also makes this country stronger.

And that's why over the past 2 years, we've made major investments to take care of our military families. Secretary Gates has been one of the leaders in this process: new housing and childcare for families, new schools for military kids, better health care for veterans, new educational opportunities for hundreds of thousands of veterans and their family members under the post-9/11 GI bill.

And that's why, as part of a landmark Presidential Study Directive, for the first time ever, the well-being of our military families is now a national priority—not just a Defense Department priority, not just a VA priority, it is a Federal Government priority.

Today my administration is working to implement nearly 50 specific commitments to improve the lives of military families, everything from protecting families from financial scams to improving education for military kids and spouses to stepping up our fight to end homelessness among veterans. And as Commander in Chief, I'm not going to be satisfied until we meet these commitments. Across this administration, we're going to keep doing everything in our power to give our military families the support and the respect that they deserve.

But as we've said all along, this can't be the work of Government alone. Something else has

been true throughout our history: Our military and our military families can't be the only ones bearing the burden of our security. The United States of America is strongest—and as Americans, we are at our best—when we remember our obligations to each other; when we remember that the price of freedom cannot simply be paid by a select few; when we embrace our responsibilities to each other, especially those who serve and sacrifice in our name.

And that's why the extraordinary work that Michelle and Jill have been engaged in these past 2 years is so important. I remember how it began. It was during our campaign. Michelle was meeting with women all across the country, listening to their struggles, hearing their stories. And inevitably there were complaints about husbands and—[*laughter*]—not doing enough around the house and—[*laughter*]—being confused when you've got to brush the daughter's hair and get that ponytail right. [*Laughter*] So they were sharing notes. But in all these conversations, there was one group that just kept on capturing Michelle's heart, and that was military spouses.

And she decided right then and there, if I was given an opportunity to serve as President and she was given the opportunity to serve as First Lady, she would be their voice. And that's exactly what she and Jill have done.

You all see the events around the country—on the bases, in the communities, at the hospitals with our wounded warriors—where Michelle and Jill celebrate our military families—celebrate your families—and what we can do to support you better. But what you don't see is what happens when the cameras are off, how Michelle and Jill come back and they are inspired by what they saw and they use their platform to advocate on your behalf in every single agency.

So I want every military family to know that Michelle hears you, not just as a First Lady, not just as a fellow American, but as a wife and a daughter and a mom. She's standing up for you and your families not just today, in public events like this one, but every day. And the voice that she promised to be, that's what she's been out there doing, making sure that you're getting the support and appreciation that you and your families deserve.

And so it is my honor to introduce to you my extraordinary wife, America's extraordinary First Lady, Michelle Obama.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:34 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden, his wife Jill T. Biden, and the First Lady.

Remarks at George Washington University
April 13, 2011

Thank you very much. Please have a seat. Please have a seat, everyone.

It is wonderful to be back at GW. I want you to know that one of the reasons that I worked so hard with Democrats and Republicans to keep the Government open was so that I could show up here today. I wanted to make sure that all of you had one more excuse to skip class. [*Laughter*] You're welcome.

I want to give a special thanks to Steven Knapp, the president of GW. I just saw him; where is he? There he is right there.

I want to—we've got a lot of distinguished guests here, a couple of people I want to acknowledge. First of all, my outstanding Vice President, Joe Biden, is here. Our Secretary of the Treasury, Tim Geithner, is in the house. Jack Lew, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget; Gene Sperling, Chair of the National Economic Council, is here. Members of our bipartisan fiscal commission are here, including the two outstanding Chairs; Erskine Bowles and Alan Simpson are here.

And we have a number of Members of Congress here today. I'm grateful for all of you taking the time to attend.

What we've been debating here in Washington over the last few weeks will affect the lives

of the students here and families all across America in potentially profound ways. This debate over budgets and deficits is about more than just numbers on a page. It's about more than just cutting and spending. It's about the kind of future that we want. It's about the kind of country that we believe in. And that's what I want to spend some time talking about today.

From our first days as a nation, we have put our faith in free markets and free enterprise as the engine of America's wealth and prosperity. More than citizens of any other country, we are rugged individualists, a self-reliant people with a healthy skepticism of too much government.

But there's always been another thread running through our history: a belief that we're all connected and that there are some things we can only do together as a nation. We believe, in the words of our first Republican President, Abraham Lincoln, that through government, we should do together what we cannot do as well for ourselves.

And so we've built a strong military to keep us secure and public schools and universities to educate our citizens. We've laid down railroads and highways to facilitate travel and commerce. We've supported the work of scientists and researchers whose discoveries have saved lives, unleashed repeated technological revolutions, and led to countless new jobs and entire new industries. Each of us has benefited from these investments, and we're a more prosperous country as a result.

Now, part of this American belief that we're all connected also expresses itself in a conviction that each one of us deserves some basic measure of security and dignity. We recognize that no matter how responsibly we live our lives, hard times or bad luck, a crippling illness or a layoff may strike any one of us. "There but for the grace of God go I," we say to ourselves. And so we contribute to programs like Medicare and Social Security, which guarantee us health care and a measure of basic income after a lifetime of hard work; unemployment insurance, which protects us against unexpected job loss; and Medicaid, which provides care for millions of seniors in nursing homes, poor children, those with disabilities. We're a better country because of these commitments. I'll go further. We would not be a great country without those commitments.

Now, for much of the last century, our Nation found a way to afford these investments and priorities with the taxes paid by its citizens. As a country that values fairness, wealthier individuals have traditionally borne a greater share of this burden than the middle class or those less fortunate. Everybody pays, but the wealthier have borne a little more. This is not because we begrudge those who've done well; we rightly celebrate their success. Instead, it's a basic reflection of our belief that those who've benefited most from our way of life can afford to give back a little bit more. Moreover, this belief hasn't hindered the success of those at the top of the income scale. They continue to do better and better with each passing year.

Now, at certain times, particularly during war or recession, our Nation has had to borrow money to pay for some of our priorities. And as most families understand, a little credit card debt isn't going to hurt if it's temporary.

But as far back as the 1980s, America started amassing debt at more alarming levels, and our leaders began to realize that a larger challenge was on the horizon. They knew that eventually, the baby boom generation would retire, which meant a much bigger portion of our citizens would be relying on programs like Medicare, Social Security, and possibly Medicaid. Like parents with young children who know they have to start saving for the college years, America had to start borrowing less and saving more to prepare for the retirement of an entire generation.

To meet this challenge, our leaders came together three times during the 1990s to reduce our Nation's deficit—three times. They forged historic agreements that required tough decisions made by the first President Bush, then made by President Clinton, by Democratic Congresses and by a Republican Congress. All three agreements asked for shared responsibility and shared sacrifice. But they largely protected the middle class, they largely protected our commitment to seniors, they protected our key investments in our future.

As a result of these bipartisan efforts, America's finances were in great shape by the year 2000. We went from deficit to surplus. America was actually on track to becoming completely debt free, and we were prepared for the retirement of the baby boomers.

But after Democrats and Republicans committed to fiscal discipline during the 1990s, we lost our way in the decade that followed. We increased spending dramatically for two wars and an expensive prescription drug program, but we didn't pay for any of this new spending. Instead, we made the problem worse with trillions of dollars in unpaid-for tax cuts, tax cuts that went to every millionaire and billionaire in the country, tax cuts that will force us to borrow an average of $500 billion every year over the next decade.

To give you an idea of how much damage this caused to our Nation's checkbook, consider this: In the last decade, if we had simply found a way to pay for the tax cuts and the prescription drug benefit, our deficit would currently be at low historical levels in the coming years.

But that's not what happened. And so, by the time I took office, we once again found ourselves deeply in debt and unprepared for a baby boom retirement that is now starting to take place. When I took office, our projected deficit, annually, was more than $1 trillion. On top of that, we faced a terrible financial crisis and a recession that, like most recessions, led us to temporarily borrow even more.

In this case, we took a series of emergency steps that saved millions of jobs, kept credit flowing, and provided working families extra money in their pocket. It was absolutely the right thing to do, but these steps were expensive and added to our deficits in the short term.

So that's how our fiscal challenge was created. That's how we got here. And now that our economic recovery is gaining strength, Democrats and Republicans must come together and restore the fiscal responsibility that served us so well in the 1990s. We have to live within our means. We have to reduce our deficit, and we have to get back on a path that will allow us to pay down our debt. And we have to do it in a way that protects the recovery, protects the investments we need to grow, creates jobs, and helps us win the future.

Now, before I get into how we can achieve this goal, some of you, particularly the younger people here—you don't qualify, Joe. [*Laughter*] Some of you might be wondering, "Why is this so important? Why does this matter to me?"

Well, here's why. Even after our economy recovers, our Government will still be on track to spend more money than it takes in throughout this decade and beyond. That means we'll have to keep borrowing more from countries like China. That means more of your tax dollars each year will go towards paying off the interest on all the loans that we keep taking out. By the end of this decade, the interest that we owe on our debt could rise to nearly $1 trillion. Think about that. That's the interest—just the interest payments.

Then, as the baby boomers start to retire in greater numbers and health care costs continue to rise, the situation will get even worse. By 2025, the amount of taxes we currently pay will only be enough to finance our health care programs—Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, and the interest we owe on our debt. That's it. Every other national priority, education, transportation, even our national security, will have to be paid for with borrowed money.

Now ultimately, all this rising debt will cost us jobs and damage our economy. It will prevent us from making the investments we need to win the future. We won't be able to afford good schools, new research, or the repair of roads, all the things that create new jobs and businesses here in America. Businesses will be less likely to invest and open shop in a country that seems unwilling or unable to balance its books. And if our creditors start worrying that we may be unable to pay back our debts, that could drive up interest rates for everybody who borrows money, making it harder for businesses to expand and hire or families to take out a mortgage.

Here's the good news: That doesn't have to be our future. That doesn't have to be the country that we leave our children. We can solve this problem. We came together as Democrats and

Republicans to meet this challenge before; we can do it again.

But that starts by being honest about what's causing our deficit. You see, most Americans tend to dislike Government spending in the abstract, but like the stuff that it buys. Most of us, regardless of party affiliation, believe that we should have a strong military and a strong defense. Most Americans believe we should invest in education and medical research. Most Americans think we should protect commitments like Social Security and Medicare. And without even looking at a poll, my finely honed political instincts tell me that almost nobody believes they should be paying higher taxes. [*Laughter*]

So because all this spending is popular with both Republicans and Democrats alike and because nobody wants to pay higher taxes, politicians are often eager to feed the impression that solving the problem is just a matter of eliminating waste and abuse. You'll hear that phrase a lot. "We just need to eliminate waste and abuse." The implication is that tackling the deficit issue won't require tough choices. Or politicians suggest that we can somehow close our entire deficit by eliminating things like foreign aid, even though foreign aid makes up about 1 percent of our entire Federal budget.

So here's the truth. Around two-thirds of our budget—two-thirds—is spent on Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and national security. Two-thirds. Programs like unemployment insurance, student loans, veterans' benefits, and tax credits for working families take up another 20 percent. What's left, after interest on the debt, is just 12 percent for everything else. That's 12 percent for all of our national priorities. Education, clean energy, medical research, transportation, our national parks, food safety, keeping our air and water clean, you name it—all of that accounts for 12 percent of our budget.

Now, up till now, the debate here in Washington, the cuts proposed by a lot of folks in Washington, have focused exclusively on that 12 percent. But cuts to that 12 percent alone won't solve the problem. So any serious plan to tackle our deficit will require us to put everything on the table and take on excess spending wherever it exists in the budget.

A serious plan doesn't require us to balance our budget overnight. In fact, economists think that with the economy just starting to grow again, we need a phased-in approach. But it does require tough decisions and support from our leaders in both parties now. Above all, it will require us to choose a vision of the America we want to see 5 years, 10 years, 20 years down the road.

Now, to their credit, one vision has been presented and championed by Republicans in the House of Representatives and embraced by several of their party's Presidential candidates. It's a plan that aims to reduce our deficit by $4 trillion over the next 10 years, and one that addresses the challenge of Medicare and Medicaid in the years after that.

These are both worthy goals. They're worthy goals for us to achieve. But the way this plan achieves those goals would lead to a fundamentally different America than the one we've known, certainly in my lifetime. In fact, I think it would be fundamentally different than what we've known throughout our history.

A 70-percent cut in clean energy, a 25-percent cut in education, a 30-percent cut in transportation, cuts in college Pell grants that will grow to more than $1,000 per year, that's the proposal. These aren't the kind of cuts you make when you're trying to get rid of some waste or find extra savings in the budget. These aren't the kinds of cuts that the fiscal commission proposed. These are the kinds of cuts that tell us we can't afford the America that I believe in and I think you believe in.

I believe it paints a vision of our future that is deeply pessimistic. It's a vision that says if our roads crumble and our bridges collapse, we can't afford to fix them. If there are bright young Americans who have the drive and the will but not the money to go to college, we can't afford to send them.

Go to China and you'll see businesses opening research labs and solar facilities. South Korean children are outpacing our kids in math and science. They're scrambling to figure out how they put more money into education. Bra-

zil is investing billions in new infrastructure and can run half their cars not on high-priced gasoline, but on biofuels. And yet we are presented with a vision that says: The American people, the United States of America, the greatest nation on Earth, can't afford any of this.

It's a vision that says America can't afford to keep the promise we've made to care for our seniors. It says that 10 years from now, if you're a 65-year-old who's eligible for Medicare, you should have to pay nearly $6,400 more than you would today. It says instead of guaranteed health care, you will get a voucher. And if that voucher isn't worth enough to buy the insurance that's available in the open marketplace, well, tough luck, you're on your own. Put simply, it ends Medicare as we know it.

It's a vision that says up to 50 million Americans have to lose their health insurance in order for us to reduce the deficit. Who are these 50 million Americans? Many are somebody's grandparents—may be one of yours—who wouldn't be able to afford nursing home care without Medicaid. Many are poor children. Some are middle class families who have children with autism or Down's syndrome. Some of these kids with disabilities are—the disabilities are so severe that they require 24-hour care. These are the Americans we'd be telling to fend for themselves.

And worst of all, this is a vision that says even though Americans can't afford to invest in education at current levels or clean energy, even though we can't afford to maintain our commitment on Medicare and Medicaid, we can somehow afford more than $1 trillion in new tax breaks for the wealthy. Think about that.

In the last decade, the average income of the bottom 90 percent of all working Americans actually declined. Meanwhile, the top 1 percent saw their income rise by an average of more than a quarter of a million dollars each. That's who needs to pay less taxes?

They want to give people like me a $200,000 tax cut that's paid for by asking 33 seniors each to pay $6,000 more in health costs. That's not right. And it's not going to happen as long as I'm President.

This vision is less about reducing the deficit than it is about changing the basic social compact in America. Ronald Reagan's own budget Director said there's nothing "serious" or "courageous" about this plan. There's nothing serious about a plan that claims to reduce the deficit by spending a trillion dollars on tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires. And I don't think there's anything courageous about asking for sacrifice from those who can least afford it and don't have any clout on Capitol Hill. That's not a vision of the America I know.

The America I know is generous and compassionate. It's a land of opportunity and optimism. Yes, we take responsibility for ourselves, but we also take responsibility for each other, for the country we want and the future that we share. We're a nation that built a railroad across a continent and brought light to communities shrouded in darkness. We sent a generation to college on the GI bill, and we saved millions of seniors from poverty with Social Security and Medicare. We have led the world in scientific research and technological breakthroughs that have transformed millions of lives. That's who we are. This is the America that I know. We don't have to choose between a future of spiraling debt and one where we forfeit our investment in our people and our country.

To meet our fiscal challenge, we will need to make reforms. We will all need to make sacrifices. But we do not have to sacrifice the America we believe in. And as long as I'm President, we won't.

So today I'm proposing a more balanced approach to achieve $4 trillion in deficit reduction over 12 years. It's an approach that borrows from the recommendations of the bipartisan fiscal commission that I appointed last year, and it builds on the roughly $1 trillion in deficit reduction I already proposed in my 2012 budget. It's an approach that puts every kind of spending on the table, but one that protects the middle class, our promise to seniors, and our investments in the future.

The first step in our approach is to keep annual domestic spending low by building on the savings that both parties agreed to last week.

That step alone will save us about $750 billion over 12 years. We will make the tough cuts necessary to achieve these savings, including in programs that I care deeply about, but I will not sacrifice the core investments that we need to grow and create jobs. We will invest in medical research. We will invest in clean energy technology. We will invest in new roads and airports and broadband access. We will invest in education. We will invest in job training. We will do what we need to do to compete, and we will win the future.

The second step in our approach is to find additional savings in our defense budget. Now, as Commander in Chief, I have no greater responsibility than protecting our national security, and I will never accept cuts that compromise our ability to defend our homeland or America's interests around the world. But as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Mullen, has said, the greatest long-term threat to America's national security is America's debt. So just as we must find more savings in domestic programs, we must do the same in defense. And we can do that while still keeping ourselves safe.

Over the last 2 years, Secretary Bob Gates has courageously taken on wasteful spending, saving $400 billion in current and future spending. I believe we can do that again. We need to not only eliminate waste and improve efficiency and effectiveness, but we're going to have to conduct a fundamental review of America's missions, capabilities, and our role in a changing world. I intend to work with Secretary Gates and the Joint Chiefs on this review, and I will make specific decisions about spending after it's complete.

The third step in our approach is to further reduce health care spending in our budget. Now, here, the difference with the House Republican plan could not be clearer. Their plan essentially lowers the Government's health care bills by asking seniors and poor families to pay them instead. Our approach lowers the Government's health care bills by reducing the cost of health care itself.

Already, the reforms we passed in the health care law will reduce our deficit by $1 trillion. My approach would build on these reforms. We will reduce wasteful subsidies and erroneous payments. We will cut spending on prescription drugs by using Medicare's purchasing power to drive greater efficiency and speed generic brands of medicine onto the market. We will work with Governors of both parties to demand more efficiency and accountability from Medicaid.

We will change the way we pay for health care, not by the procedure or the number of days spent in a hospital, but with new incentives for doctors and hospitals to prevent injuries and improve results. And we will slow the growth of Medicare costs by strengthening an independent commission of doctors, nurses, medical experts, and consumers who will look at all the evidence and recommend the best ways to reduce unnecessary spending while protecting access to the services that seniors need.

Now, we believe the reforms we've proposed to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid will enable us to keep these commitments to our citizens while saving us $500 billion by 2023 and an additional $1 trillion in the decade after that. But if we're wrong, and Medicare costs rise faster than we expect, then this approach will give the independent commission the authority to make additional savings by further improving Medicare.

But let me be absolutely clear: I will preserve these health care programs as a promise we make to each other in this society. I will not allow Medicare to become a voucher program that leaves seniors at the mercy of the insurance industry with a shrinking benefit to pay for rising costs. I will not tell families with children who have disabilities that they have to fend for themselves. We will reform these programs, but we will not abandon the fundamental commitment this country has kept for generations.

That includes, by the way, our commitment to Social Security. While Social Security is not the cause of our deficit, it faces real, long-term challenges in a country that's growing older. As I said in the State of the Union, both parties should work together now to strengthen Social Security for future generations. But we have to

do it without putting at risk current retirees or the most vulnerable or people with disabilities, without slashing benefits for future generations, and without subjecting Americans' guaranteed retirement income to the whims of the stock market. And it can be done.

The fourth step in our approach is to reduce spending in the Tax Code, so-called tax expenditures. In December, I agreed to extend the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans because it was the only way I could prevent a tax hike on middle class Americans. But we cannot afford $1 trillion worth of tax cuts for every millionaire and billionaire in our society. We can't afford it. And I refuse to renew them again.

Beyond that, the Tax Code is also loaded up with spending on things like itemized deductions. And while I agree with the goals of many of these deductions, from homeownership to charitable giving, we can't ignore the fact that they provide millionaires an average tax break of $75,000 but do nothing for the typical middle class family that doesn't itemize. So my budget calls for limiting itemized deductions for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans, a reform that would reduce the deficit by $320 billion over 10 years.

But to reduce the deficit, I believe we should go further. And that's why I'm calling on Congress to reform our individual Tax Code so that it is fair and simple, so that the amount of taxes you pay isn't determined by what kind of accountant you can afford.

I believe reform should protect the middle class, promote economic growth, and build on the fiscal commission's model of reducing tax expenditures so that there's enough savings to both lower rates and lower the deficit. And as I called for in the State of the Union, we should reform our corporate Tax Code as well, to make our businesses and our economy more competitive.

So this is my approach to reduce the deficit by $4 trillion over the next 12 years. It's an approach that achieves about $2 trillion in spending cuts across the budget. It will lower our interest payments on the debt by $1 trillion. It calls for tax reform to cut about $1 trillion in tax expenditures, spending in the Tax Code. And it achieves these goals while protecting the middle class, protecting our commitment to seniors, and protecting our investments in the future.

Now, in the coming years, if the recovery speeds up and our economy grows faster than our current projections, we can make even greater progress than I've pledged here. But just to hold Washington, and to hold me, accountable and make sure that the debt burden continues to decline, my plan includes a debt fail-safe. If, by 2014, our debt is not projected to fall as a share of the economy, if we haven't hit our targets, if Congress has failed to act, then my plan will require us to come together and make up the additional savings with more spending cuts and more spending reductions in the Tax Code. That should be an incentive for us to act boldly now, instead of kicking our problems further down the road.

So this is our vision for America; this is my vision for America: a vision where we live within our means while still investing in our future, where everyone makes sacrifices but no one bears all the burden, where we provide a basic measure of security for our citizens and we provide rising opportunity for our children.

There will be those who vigorously disagree with my approach. I can guarantee that as well. [*Laughter*] Some will argue we should not even consider ever, ever raising taxes, even if only on the wealthiest Americans. It's just an article of faith to them. I say that at a time when the tax burden on the wealthy is at its lowest level in half a century, the most fortunate among us can afford to pay a little more. I don't need another tax cut. Warren Buffett doesn't need another tax cut. Not if we have to pay for it by making seniors pay more for Medicare or by cutting kids from Head Start or by taking away college scholarships that I wouldn't be here without and that some of you would not be here without.

And here's the thing: I believe that most wealthy Americans would agree with me. They want to give back to their country, a country that's done so much for them. It's just Washington hasn't asked them to.

Others will say that we shouldn't even talk about cutting spending until the economy is fully recovered. These are mostly folks in my party. I'm sympathetic to this view, which is one of the reasons I supported the payroll tax cuts we passed in December. It's also why we have to use a scalpel and not a machete to reduce the deficit so that we can keep making the investments that create jobs. But doing nothing on the deficit is just not an option. Our debt has grown so large that we could do real damage to the economy if we don't begin a process now to get our fiscal house in order.

Finally, there are those who believe we shouldn't make any reforms to Medicare, Medicaid, or Social Security, out of fear that any talk of change to these programs will immediately usher in the sort of steps that the House Republicans have proposed. And I understand those fears. But I guarantee that if we don't make any changes at all, we won't be able to keep our commitment to a retiring generation that will live longer and will face higher health care costs than those who came before.

Indeed, to those in my own party, I say that if we truly believe in a progressive vision of our society, we have an obligation to prove that we can afford our commitments. If we believe the Government can make a difference in people's lives, we have the obligation to prove that it works by making Government smarter and leaner and more effective.

Of course, there are those who simply say there's no way we can come together at all and agree on a solution to this challenge. They'll say the politics of this city are just too broken, the choices are just too hard, the parties are just too far apart. And after a few years on this job, I have some sympathy for this view. [*Laughter*]

But I also know that we've come together before and met big challenges. Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill came together to save Social Security for future generations. The first President Bush and a Democratic Congress came together to reduce the deficit. President Clinton and a Republican Congress battled each other ferociously, disagreed on just about everything, but they still found a way to balance the budget. And in the last few months, both parties have come together to pass historic tax relief and spending cuts.

And I know there are Republicans and Democrats in Congress who want to see a balanced approach to deficit reduction. And even those Republicans I disagree with most strongly, I believe are sincere about wanting to do right by their country. We may disagree on our visions, but I truly believe they want to do the right thing.

So I believe we can, and must, come together again. This morning I met with Democratic and Republican leaders in Congress to discuss the approach that I laid out today. And in early May, the Vice President will begin regular meetings with leaders in both parties with the aim of reaching a final agreement on a plan to reduce the deficit and get it done by the end of June.

I don't expect the details in any final agreement to look exactly like the approach I laid out today. This is a democracy; that's not how things work. I'm eager to hear other ideas from all ends of the political spectrum. And though I'm sure the criticism of what I've said here today will be fierce in some quarters, and my critique of the House Republican approach has been strong, Americans deserve and will demand that we all make an effort to bridge our differences and find common ground.

This larger debate that we're having—this larger debate about the size and the role of Government—it has been with us since our founding days. And during moments of great challenge and change, like the one that we're living through now, the debate gets sharper and it gets more vigorous. That's not a bad thing. In fact, it's a good thing. As a country that prizes both our individual freedom and our obligations to one another, this is one of the most important debates that we can have.

But no matter what we argue, no matter where we stand, we've always held certain beliefs as Americans. We believe that in order to preserve our own freedoms and pursue our own happiness, we can't just think about ourselves. We have to think about the country that made these liberties possible. We have to think

about our fellow citizens with whom we share a community. And we have to think about what's required to preserve the American Dream for future generations.

This sense of responsibility to each other and to our country, this isn't a partisan feeling. This isn't a Democratic or a Republican idea; it's patriotism.

The other day I received a letter from a man in Florida. He started off by telling me he didn't vote for me and he hasn't always agreed with me. But even though he's worried about our economy and the state of our politics, here's what he said. He said: "I still believe. I believe in that great country that my grandfather told me about. I believe that somewhere lost in this quagmire of petty bickering on every news station, the American Dream is still alive. . . . We need to use our dollars here rebuilding, refurbishing, and restoring all that our ancestors struggled to create and maintain. . . . We as a people must do this together, no matter the color of the state one comes from or the side of the aisle one might sit on."

"I still believe." I still believe as well. And I know that if we can come together and uphold our responsibilities to one another and to this larger enterprise that is America, we will keep the dream of our founding alive in our time, and we will pass it on to our children. We will pass on to our children a country that we believe in.

Thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:48 p.m. in the Jack Morton Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to David A. Stockman, former Director, Office of Management and Budget; and Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Cochairs of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform
April 14, 2011

Yesterday I laid out a plan to cut $4 trillion from our deficit. It is a balanced plan that asks for shared sacrifice in order to provide shared opportunity for all Americans. And I'm very pleased today to have Erskine Bowles and Alan Simpson, the chairs of my fiscal commission, because, very frankly, it is the framework that they developed that helps to shape my thinking on these issues.

As they pointed out in their bipartisan effort, it is important that we put everything on the table. We've got to take some tough decisions when it comes to domestic spending. We've got to look at everything, including our security spending, in order to achieve the goal that we need.

It's important that we look at our Tax Code and find a way to work together to not only simplify and make the tax system fairer, but also that we use it as a tool to help us achieve our deficit targets.

And it's also important—and I think these gentlemen share the view—that we can't exempt anybody from these efforts, that it's not appropriate for us to ask for sacrifices from everybody except for the 2 percent of Americans who are doing best, but rather, we should ask everybody to participate in this effort to get our fiscal house in order.

So my main purpose here today is to once again thank them for their outstanding work, but more importantly, to solicit their ideas in terms of how we move forward. No matter how we may disagree between parties, no matter how much we have spent time debating the issues, at some point, we're going to have to come together as Americans. And yesterday I brought together the leaders of both Chambers, leaders of both parties, to discuss with them how we could start moving rapidly to get some of these major issues resolved.

And I'm pleased that Vice President Biden is going to be heading up that effort, but we're

going to need the help of citizens who served this country in extraordinary ways in the past and are continuing to do so in their spare time. I'm looking forward to having them as partners in order to get this done.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:47 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Amir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar

April 14, 2011

President Obama. Well, I want to welcome the Amir of Qatar, and we have just completed a very useful conversation. I expressed to him my appreciation of the leadership that the Amir has shown when it comes to democracy in the Middle East, and in particular, the work that they have done in trying to promote a peaceful transition in Libya.

We would not have been able, I think, to shape the kind of broad-based international coalition that includes not only our NATO members, but also includes Arab States, without the Amir's leadership. He is motivated by a belief that the Libyan people should have the rights and freedoms of all people. And as a consequence, Qatar is not only supportive diplomatically, but is also supportive militarily, and we are very appreciative of the outstanding work that the Qataris have done side by side with the other international coalition members.

In addition to our efforts in Libya, we have a strong relationship between our two countries. It is an economic relationship. It is a military relationship. It is a cultural relationship. And obviously, Qatar has done very well under His Highness's leadership, but his influence extends beyond his borders. And so we've had discussions about how we can continue to promote democracy, human rights, increased freedom, and reform throughout the Middle East.

We discussed our mutual interest in seeing a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Amir provided me insights into how he sees reform evolving throughout the region.

We also discussed some of the areas where our two countries are cooperating beyond the Middle East. For example, Qatar has been a leader internationally around the issues of food security, and so we are partnering on those issues. In North Africa, in Sudan, Qatar has helped to sponsor talks to see if we can resolve the situation in Darfur. And so what we've pledged is not only that we would continue these consultations in the short term, but that we would continue to work over the long term to deepen our relationship.

Finally, I congratulated His Highness on the fact that Qatar now has the World Cup in 2022. And so I told him that I would undoubtedly be an ex-President by that point, but that I was hoping that I could still get good seats if I traveled to Doha.

So, Your Highness, thank you for your visit. Thank you for your leadership on Libya. And we look forward to working with you for many years to come.

Amir Hamad. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for hosting me here in the White House and for having this meeting with you.

And I would like to extend to you our deep appreciation and thanks for the position the United States has taken in support of the democratization process that has taken place in Tunisia, in Egypt, and what is attempting to take place in Libya.

And I would like to reiterate what you have mentioned, Mr. President, and that is the strength of the relationship that exists between the United States and Qatar. And of course, the most important issue for us in the region is the Palestine-Israeli conflict and how to find a way to establish a Palestinian state.

And we do understand your position, Mr. President, in supporting the existence of two states peacefully living side by side, and we

support your position. And regarding Darfur, we will exert our best effort to cooperate with you on finding the best way out. This has been a longstanding issue, but I think with our common capabilities, we will be able to achieve that goal.

[*At this point, Amir Hamad spoke in English.*]

And I will not forget to send your tickets for the World Cup. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Thank you, my friend.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Amir Hamad spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on Signing the Comprehensive 1099 Taxpayer Protection and Repayment of Exchange Subsidy Overpayments Act of 2011
April 14, 2011

Today I was pleased to take another step to relieve unnecessary burdens on small businesses by signing H.R. 4 into law. Small-business owners are the engine of our economy, and because Democrats and Republicans worked together, we can ensure they spend their time and resources creating jobs and growing their business, not filling out more paperwork. I look forward to continuing to work with Congress to improve the tax credit policy in this legislation, and I am eager to work with anyone with ideas about how we can make health care better or more affordable.

NOTE: H.R. 4, approved April 14, was assigned Public Law No. 112–9.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Chicago, Illinois
April 14, 2011

Hello, Chicago! Thank you. Thank you, everybody. It's good to be home. Thank you. All right, everybody have a seat. Everybody have a seat. You're making me blush. [*Laughter*]

We've got some very special guests here today. First of all, my former seatmate in the Illinois State Senate, who is doing gangbuster work all over the State, Attorney General Lisa Madigan is in the house. Where is Lisa? Where is she? There she is.

A guy who I basically follow around to see what he eats and drinks so I can look like him, somebody who never ages, always doing the right thing on behalf of communities all across the State, especially here in Chicago, Secretary of State Jesse White is in the house.

Our newly elected Cook County president, one of my earliest supporters, and also my former alderwoman—so I hope that my garbage is still being picked up—Toni Preckwinkle is in the house. She's around here somewhere.

And then I have to admit that I got a little confused. [*Laughter*] I walk in and there are these two guys talking, both of them very animated, both of them a little intimidating, even though they're not tall in stature. [*Laughter*] I was trying to figure out who I should bow to first. I decided to go with the current mayor—[*laughter*]—somebody who has done more to make Chicago not just a great American city, but a great world city, and his legacy is going to be deep and lasting, as deep and lasting as his father's was. We are grateful for his service, the mayor of the city of Chicago, Richard Daley.

Bill is doing okay, Rich. [*Laughter*] I mean, you know, there are times where he's still kind of figuring out where everything is—[*laughter*]—but overall he's making the grade. Of course, he had some big shoes to fill. And I could not be prouder of the job this man did on behalf of America as my Chief of Staff.

As Bill knows, there probably is not a harder job in Government than being Chief of Staff.

You get all the blame and little of the credit, and the pressures are enormous and they are constant. And I rely extraordinarily heavily, given everything that's on our plate, on the person who essentially oversees the executive functions of the White House.

And so I am blessed now to have a great Chief of Staff, but I also am so lucky to have had in some of the toughest times that we've seen since the Great Depression, somebody who is not only a great manager, a great strategist, a great political thinker, but also my friend. Yes, he is foul mouthed. [*Laughter*] Yes, that finger thing is a little creepy. [*Laughter*] But I love him anyway, and, Chicago, you did the right thing by electing him the next mayor of the city of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel.

Where did Rahm go? He's in the back somewhere. He's cutting a deal of some sort. [*Laughter*]

Look, I don't want to make a long speech, mainly just because even though I'm not supposed to do it, I just want to go around and say hello to everybody, because as I look around the room, I've got as good a collection of friends from every stage of my life in this room as anybody could hope for.

I've got people who helped me get started as a lawyer. I've got folks who helped me get started in politics. I've got folks who worked with me down in Springfield. I've got people who were some of my earliest supporters in my congressional race and nursed me back to health after a beating. [*Laughter*] I've got folks who believed that I might be a United States Senator when nobody could pronounce my name, long before I made a speech in Boston. And then I've got people that had the faith that I could perform the functions of the highest office in the land.

So I—[*applause*]—I've got some folks who taught with me at the University of Chicago. I've got some Hyde Parkers in the house. I've got some folks who were there the summer I met my wife and folks who were there when my children were born. So as I look across the room, it's a record of my adult life and the people who helped me to become the man I am.

The last 2½ years have obviously been extraordinary. We understood when we put together our Presidential campaign that the country was entering a crossroads, that we were going to have to make some fundamental decisions about who we were and who we are as a people. And I got into this race for President because I believed that what makes us great is our incredible commitment to individual freedom and individual responsibility; the fact that with some pluck and some hard work and some good fortune, here in America, anybody can make it, regardless of race or creed or station.

But what made us great is also the fact that this collection of people from all around the world are somehow able to come together and pledge allegiance not just to a flag, but to a creed; that we're able to join together in this common enterprise; that we're able to look out for one another; that when we make it, we're saying to ourselves, who else can we pull up the ladder; that there's a sense of community that is not defined simply by ethnicity or where we go to church or mosque or synagogue or temple, but a commitment to each other that somehow is greater than the sum of its parts.

That's why I decided to run for President. That's why you supported me. Those are the values that you helped teach me when I first came to Chicago so many years ago. And those values have been put to the test over the last 2½ years, because Americans have gone through a tough time.

I can't describe night after night reading the letters that I get, the e-mails that I get, from people all across the country, just heartbreaking stories: children talking about their parents losing their jobs or losing their homes and wondering if they're going to be okay; folks sending out job application after job application after job application and nothing coming back; parents of young men and women who've been killed in action, trying to describe how proud they are of those kids even though their heart just aches, and asking to make sure that as the Commander in Chief that I am living up to that full measure of devotion that they displayed.

And so for the last 2½ years, what I've tried to do is to make sure that every day when I wake up, I remember why I ran and I remember why you supported me. And whether it was passing a Recovery Act that would get the economy back on its feet and put people back to work; saving an auto industry that a lot of people had written off; making sure that we had a financial system that is functioning, but also one that was sufficiently regulated, that consumers got a fair shake; making sure that we brought combat in Iraq to a close; making sure that anybody can serve in our military regardless of their sexual orientation; making sure that in a country as wealthy as ours nobody is going bankrupt because they get sick and no parent has to worry about selling their house because their child has a preexisting condition and he can't get health insurance; making sure that we got more women on the Supreme Court and that one of them is a Latina; and making sure that women get equal pay for equal work so that my daughters, when they come up, are going to have the same chances as your sons—each and every time we've had to make a decision, my guiding principle, that north star, has been those values that we talked about during the campaign: I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper. A belief in an America that is competitive and compassionate. A belief that there's nothing we can't accomplish if we come together, and that we have to think big in terms of what we need to accomplish.

And we've made extraordinary progress, but we still have so much work to do. There's still too many people out there writing me letters that don't have a job, too many folks who are worried about losing their home. There's still too many kids trapped in poverty in cities and rural areas all across America that we haven't been able to reach. There's still discrimination out there. There's still unfairness and injustice out there.

We've still got a hundred thousand troops in Afghanistan, who are remarkable and doing everything they can to keep us safe. We still have roads that need to be fixed and bridges that need to be repaired. We still need an energy policy that doesn't make us vulnerable to whatever spikes in the world oil market might occur.

Right now there are folks in the Chicagoland area who are every day trying to figure out how am I going to fill up my gas tank. And all the tax cuts that we've provided to help working class and middle class families, they're worried about those tax breaks being entirely eaten up by 4-dollar-a-gallon gas.

We still have to worry about making sure that as the world's largest economy, as the world's wealthiest nation, that we're taking the lead when it comes to climate change. We still have an obligation to make sure that we have an immigration policy in this country that matches up with our values as a nation of laws, but also a nation of immigrants. There are still small businesses out there just waiting to be started if they're getting the right financing. There are still young men and women who are just ready to seize the moment as engineers and scientists if we're just making sure those research grants are flowing. And we've got to do all this in a context, as I talked about yesterday, in which our fiscal challenges are real.

The speech I gave yesterday was not a partisan shot at the other side. It was an attempt to clarify the choice that we have as a country right now. We agree, Democrats and Republicans, that we've got to come together and have a Government that lives within its means; that is lean, is smart, is effective; that we've got a country that pays its bills and isn't borrowing 30 or 40 cents for every dollar that we spend. That is imperative.

And if we're progressive, we've got to care about the deficit just as much as the other side does, because we won't be able to fund the research that's necessary or the Head Start programs or the college loan programs or the infrastructure that we need unless it's on a firm, solid footing.

But how we get there is important. And you've got right now one side that I believe is entirely sincere that says we no longer can afford to do big things in this country. We can't afford to be compassionate.

We can't afford Medicare, so let's make sure that seniors get a voucher, and if the health

insurance companies aren't giving them full coverage or they can't afford coverage with the voucher they get, tough luck, they're on their own.

It's a vision that says we can't afford to rebuild our roads and our bridges. We can't afford high-speed rail. We can't afford broadband lines into rural areas so that everybody can be a part of this new global community. We can't afford to make sure the poor kid can go to college. We can't afford health care for another 50 million people. That's the choice they pose.

Now, understand, it is a choice. Because they're absolutely right. If people like me, if most of the people in this room, can't afford to pay a little bit more in taxes, then a lot of this stuff we can't afford. If we're insisting that those of us who are doing best in this society have no obligations to other folks, then, no, we can't afford it.

But if we're willing to go back to our deepest roots and say to ourselves, you know what, that's not how America was built, that's not how we became the greatest nation on Earth, that's not what the American way is all about; if we say to ourselves I do have that commitment to that child on the South Side or on the West Side or out in the south suburbs, for them to succeed too—my life will be better if they succeed—this is not charity, this is a good investment for me because I want to live in a society where all those kids have a shot; if we say to ourselves, you know what, I want people to have health care, I don't want them going into the emergency room and sitting and waiting and then getting the most expensive care; I think it makes sense for us to have a more effective health care system and one where everybody has basic coverage; if we're saying to ourselves, I want to make sure that Malia and Sasha and your children and your grandchildren, that they're inheriting a land that has clean rivers and air you can breathe and that's worth something to me, that's something I want to invest in because when I'm all finished here and I'm looking back on my life, I want to be able to say, we were good stewards of the planet; if that's what we believe, then we've got the ability to do that. We've got the ability to do it, and it doesn't take that much. It just doesn't take that much.

If we apply some practical common sense to this, we can solve our fiscal challenges and still have the America that we believe in. That's what this budget debate is going to be about. And that's what the 2012 campaign is going to be about.

And so over the next 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, I'm going to be a little preoccupied. [*Laughter*] I've got this day job that—[*laughter*]—that I've got to handle. And it means that I'm not going to see all of you as often I'd like. It means that I'm not going to be able to make that phone call to you and thank you even though my gratitude is profound.

It means that all of you are going to have to remember why I'm standing here, why we were successful. Because it wasn't my campaign, it was your campaign. It was your investment, it was your time, it was your energy, it was your faith, and it was your confidence that is allowing me to try to live up to those values that we share.

And if you remember that, and if you take ownership for that, and if you are just as fired up now, despite the fact that your candidate is a little older and a lot grayer—[*laughter*]—then I have every confidence that we are going to be able finish the job.

Thank you, Chicago. I love you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at N9NE Steakhouse. In his remarks, he referred to White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Chicago
April 14, 2011

Hello, everybody. Thank you. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat. These are a bunch of old friends; we can relax. It is wonderful to be home. And I want to thank the whole crew at

MK for doing just a great job. And I know everybody had a fabulous meal.

I was reminding folks that Michelle and I used to come here for dates. But now we have all these reporters come with us on dates, so it's become a little rare.

But it's wonderful to see all of you. As I look around the room, I see people who I've known for years, who supported me when nobody could pronounce my name, and so all of you are extraordinarily special. And I'm going to have a chance to travel around the room and say thank you to each of you.

There are a couple of people obviously I want to acknowledge. First of all, I'm not sure if her husband's here yet, but that doesn't matter because she is—she's one of my favorite people. Maggie Daley is in the house. So we are thrilled to have her here. Thank you. Your brother-in-law's doing okay. [*Laughter*]

Speaking of Chiefs of Staff, I am incredibly fortunate to not only have somebody now who is doing an unbelievable job and has been able to slip into what I consider to be the toughest job in Washington without missing a beat, and that's Bill Daley, but I've also benefited from a great Chief of Staff when I first got there, and he's got the best job in the world now, which is the mayor-elect, which means he doesn't actually have to do anything yet. [*Laughter*] But we love him, Rahm Emanuel.

And finally, somebody who is making really tough choices each and every day, but is guided in making those choices by great values and a knowledge and memory of where he came from and always wanting to make sure that everybody has opportunity, and that's our Governor, Pat Quinn. So, thrilled to have Patrick.

So I want to spend most of this time—this in a conversation and answering questions, and then I want to spend the rest of the time roaming around the room and kissing and hugging everybody.

We've obviously gone through an extraordinary 2½ years. And when Penny agreed to chair my finance committee back in 2007, part of the reason she did it is just, she likes me and Michelle. But part of it was, I think, a shared recognition that the country was at a crossroads. We had enormous challenges, and we had problems that we had been kicking down the road for years. And unless we acted decisively over the next 4 years, the next 8 years, the next 10 years, that America's greatness, its ability to respond to changing technologies, a changing economy, would be called into question.

And we weren't sure whether we were going to be able to pull it off. But what we were absolutely certain about was, there were certain core values that we cared deeply about and that we were going to fight for and try to give voice to. The idea that we are a country of individualists and freedom-loving people, folks who are self-reliant and entrepreneurial and understand that we have to earn our way. But also a country that recognizes we're in this together and that those of us who are lucky enough to be successful want to see other people be successful and that we want a country that is reflective of generosity and compassion and that we want every kid to be able to be a Governor or the head of a big company, regardless of where they were born, and we want a country that respects everyone, regardless of their race or their gender or their sexual orientation.

And we want a country that is thinking about the future so that we are good stewards of the Earth and we are laying the foundation for economic success, not just now, but 20 years from now and 50 years from now. And that what makes all this work is that we are committed to taking responsibility for ourselves, but also that we're responsible for something larger than ourselves.

And that has to translate itself through our Government in investments in education and investments in infrastructure and investments in science, and a willingness to make tough decisions about our budget, and willingness to make our investments in environmental protection. That all these things we do because—not out of charity—but because it makes our lives better to live in a country that is fair and just and provides an opportunity to everybody.

And so many of you became part of this campaign because you shared in those values.

And we didn't fully appreciate, I think, how historic the recession would be and how precipitous some of these issues would come at us. But we understood that we were going to have to do some big things.

And over the last 2½ years, every day I've woken up remembering why we got into this thing, remembering the sacrifices and investments that all of you made, not just in me, but in this bigger idea of America. And whether it was yanking this country out of the worst recession since the Great Depression or saving an auto industry that some people had been—had written off; or making sure that our capital markets were working the way they were supposed to so that people could invest in businesses and buy homes and finance their kids to go to college; whether it was making sure that the student loan programs worked for everybody and that our kids weren't loaded up with debt; or making sure that in a country as wealthy as ours everybody had some basic health insurance and wouldn't be bankrupt or families wouldn't have to sell their homes because they've got a child with a preexisting condition; making certain that we got our troops out of Iraq and ended combat missions there, but also made sure that anybody who wanted to serve, regardless of who they loved, were able to serve; making sure that we got two more women on the United States Supreme Court and that one of them was Latina so that we could say that that institution was truly representative; making sure that we had equal pay for equal work; and making sure that we kept America secure.

And then there were pirates and pandemics and oil spills and—but through all this, every single day, what I was thinking about was how do we keep moving the country towards that vision that we collectively had: a country that's more fair, more just, provides opportunity to all people.

I couldn't be prouder of our accomplishments because of people like Rahm, because of people like Bill, because of all of you. But we've got a lot more work to do. There's so much more to do.

And every day I get letters from people all across the country, and over the last 2½ years, I can't tell you how moving and heartbreaking and inspiring these letters are: people who do everything right, work hard, look after their families, and somehow have a spell of bad luck, are sending out résumé after résumé, but can't find a job; kids writing, saying they think their parents are going to have to sell their home and wondering if there's something I can do to help; families who have to drive 50 miles one way to get to their job and can't afford to buy a new hybrid and so are stuck seeing huge chunks of their income consumed by rising gas prices.

There's so much that I want to do for these folks because of that vision that we started with. We still have to have an energy policy that makes sure we're not subject to the whims of what happens on the other side of the world. We still have to have an immigration policy that's reflective of the fact that we're a nation of laws, but also a nation of immigrants.

And we're going to have a major budget debate over the next 6 months. We just passed this last year's budget, but that was just the appetizer. That was just the trial run. Because what we now have, and I spoke to this yesterday, is a very stark choice. Somebody asked, "Well, were you too tough on the Ryan plan yesterday?" I said, "That wasn't a critique, that was a description."

And I don't doubt the sincerity of those who are presenting this plan. But understand what it means. It—what it means is that our commitment to seniors fundamentally changes. And they'll get a voucher, and if they can't afford all the health insurance that—or the price of health insurance on the open market, they're going to have to make up the difference, and if they can't make up the difference, too bad. We won't have actually driven health care costs down. We will have just transferred it onto the backs of seniors and families who have disabled children and families that need help with their parents in a nursing home and can't afford it.

Under their vision, we can't invest in roads and bridges and broadband and high-speed rail. I mean, we would be a nation of potholes,

and our airports would be worse than places that we thought—that we used to call the Third World, but who are now investing in infrastructure.

We would not be able to invest in basic research that helped to create the Internet and helped to create GPS and is our main comparative advantage in this 21st-century economy. We couldn't afford to tell those kids on the West Side or the South Side, if you work hard, if you study hard, if you're hitting the books, that you're going to be able to afford to go to college. We couldn't guarantee that.

And what I tried to emphasize yesterday was that's not necessary. It's not a vision that's impelled by the numbers. It's a vision that is a choice because the notion is, is that somehow those of us who have been blessed by this country, that we're just looking out for ourselves and we're not willing to make sure that that kid can go to college and we're not willing to make sure that that senior is getting decent care in their golden age—their golden years.

What is going to be valuable over the next 6 months and over the next 18 months is we are going to be able to present a very clear option to the American people. We can get our fiscal house in order, but we can do it in a way that is consistent with our values and who we are as a people. Or we can decide to shrink our vision of what America is.

And I don't believe in shrinking America. That's not who we are. That's not what made America great. That's—I don't want a smaller America for Malia and Sasha, for your kids, for your grandkids. I want a big, generous, energized, optimistic country.

That's what we're fighting for. Now, over the next 6 months, I have this day job that I've got to take care of. And so the main thing I want to emphasize tonight is remember that this is not my vision, this is your vision. This is what you fought for. This is why you invested in this campaign, not just with your money, but with your time and your energy, with your hopes. I need you to take that same kind of ownership over the next 6 months.

Your candidate is a little grayer now. And some of the excitement of something entirely new is not going to be there, and I'm—I've got some dents and dings in the fender. But that vision hasn't changed. What we care about hasn't changed. Our commitments should not have changed.

And so this campaign is not my campaign, this is your campaign. And the question is, do we finish the job? I'm prepared to finish the job. I hope you are too.

Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:46 p.m. at MK restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago and his wife Maggie C. Daley; Penny S. Pritzker, chairman and founder, Pritzker Realty Group, in her former capacity as national finance chair of the President's 2008 election campaign; and Supreme Court Associate Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia M. Sotomayor. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Chicago
April 14, 2011

The President. Hello, Chicago! It is good to be back in Chicago! It's good to be back at Navy Pier. And I didn't have to pay for parking. [*Laughter*]

I remember driving around that parking lot—[*laughter*]—taking Malia and Sasha to the Children's Museum. Can't find a spot. [*Laughter*] You keep on going up, around and around and around. [*Laughter*] It's a lot smoother these days.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. Love you back.

Everybody is a special guest, but we've got some super, super special guests. First of all, we've got in the house "Mr. Cub"—Ernie Banks is here. Second of all, we've got a former Bull who doesn't

look like he's aged at all—[*laughter*]—still has that baby face—B.J. Armstrong is in the house.

I want to thank Colbie Caillat for performing tonight. And she's going to be at the White House Easter egg roll. That's big. [*Laughter*] You know you're big-time. [*Laughter*] Justin Bieber was just there.

Although I have to confess, this is very—this is a little side note. The White House Christmas party—or "Christmas in Washington" event—was going on and Usher was there and there were a bunch of performers. And there was this little guy who really sang well, great entertainer. And I was sort of acknowledging all the crowd, and I said, "And give it up for Justin 'Biber.'" [*Laughter*] I didn't know him at the time. And everybody yelled, "It's 'Bieber.'" And Malia and Sasha were mortified—[*laughter*]—when they heard that I had mispronounced his name. Anyway, that's an aside.

Rashard Mendenhall is in the house, Chicagoan and Pittsburgh Steeler.

Now, in addition, before I begin, I want to pay tribute to a friend who has recently taken over this town. He's become the most powerful man in Chicago. Unbelievable energy, sharp elbows—[*laughter*]—but has brought Chicagoans a new sense of hope about our future. Give it up for Derrick Rose.

Audience members. MVP! MVP! MVP!

The President. MVP! MVP! MVP!

I suppose Rahm is doing a pretty good job too. [*Laughter*]

And as good as Derrick is, the Bulls would not be where they need to be if it were not for—Mr. Joakim Noah is in the house. And his mom is there, and I love his mom too. She's wonderful. Yes, it's mom, you know, come on. [*Laughter*]

Now, even as we are all excited about what the future holds for Chicago under its new mayor, we also owe Rahm's predecessor, my Chief of Staff's big brother, a huge debt of gratitude for taking a city that was already a great American city and turning it into a great world city, healing some of the divisions in this city. We are grateful for Richard Daley. Give it up for Richard Daley.

But I can tell you that—I like to tease Rahm, I joke about him—this is a guy who stepped in, in one of the toughest jobs in Washington, if not the toughest job, and stood by my side every step of the way. And I have seen how he performs under pressure. I have seen the kind of commitment that he has to the American people. You guys made a good choice. He is going to be a great mayor, and I am proud to call Rahm Emanuel my friend.

So I look around the room, and as crowded as it is, I just see friends everywhere, people I've been knowing for a long, long time. It's good to be home. It is good to be home.

This is the city where I fell in love and started a family. This is the city where I got my start in politics 25 years ago, working with churches on the South Side to bring jobs to the jobless and hope to the hopeless. It's where I stood with so many of you in Grant Park almost 2½ years ago, when we showed the world that all things are possible in the United States of America.

And some of you may have heard, this is where we're going to be basing our headquarters for the 2012 campaign, right here, back home in Chicago.

Now, this is the first time in modern history that a sitting President has based their reelection campaign outside of Washington. But I decided I don't want our campaign to be just hearing all the pundits and the powerbrokers. I want our campaign to be here because you guys are the ones who got me started. I see people in this audience who supported me when nobody could pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] I see folks who supported me when I ran for Congress and got a beatdown—[*laughter*]—and then helped to nurse me back to health.

One of the things that I've seen again and again over the last couple of years is, the conversation in Washington is very different from the conversation around kitchen tables and office coolers. And I wanted to make sure that our campaign was rooted in your hopes and rooted in your dreams. I want to make sure we're putting the campaign in your hands, in the same hands, the same organizers, the same

volunteers who proved the last time that together, ordinary folks can do extraordinary things. That's what this campaign is about.

Now, we're all a bit older. [*Laughter*] Some of us are a little bit grayer.

Audience member. Oh, yeah. But you look good! [*Laughter*]

The President. I'll let Michelle know you said that. [*Laughter*]

But all of us can remember that night in Grant Park, the excitement in the streets, the sense of hope, the sense of possibility. And yet, even as we celebrated, you remember what I said back then. I said our work wasn't ending, our work was just beginning. Because while it was clear that I was going to have a full plate going into election day, I'd be lying if I said that I knew how a plate—how full that plate would be. [*Laughter*] It's been a little fuller than we imagined.

We took office in the middle of the worst recession in our lifetimes, one that left millions of Americans without jobs, had folks losing their homes, a recession so bad that many families are still grappling with the aftershocks, even though the economy is growing again.

But the economy is growing again. We're creating jobs again. Over the last 4 months, we've seen the largest drop in unemployment since 1984. Over the last 13 months, we've added nearly 2 million private sector jobs. That didn't happen by accident. It happened because we made some tough choices, like saving the American auto industry.

You remember they said it couldn't be done. There were some folks who were going to write it off, but it was the right thing to do. And now GM is hiring back every single worker they laid off, and every one of the Big Three American automakers are making a profit once again. That's because of the tough choices we made, because of the work that you did getting me into office.

So make no mistake, because of you, we've been able to make real progress over the last few years. Because of you, we were able to prevent another Great Depression. Because of you, we're making the most meaningful education reforms in a generation through a competition called Race to the Top, raising teachers up and raising learning standards in schools and States across America.

Because of you, we overcame the status quo and reformed Wall Street, making sure that we've got some of the toughest consumer protections so you won't get cheated when you apply for a mortgage or when you take out a credit card.

Because of you, we did what we've been trying to do for almost a century and we made sure that everybody in this society of ours, if you get sick, you don't have to go bankrupt. If you get sick, you don't have to mortgage your house. If your child has a preexisting condition, they're still going to be cared for because we passed health care reform that provided coverage for 30 million Americans. Because of you, we were able to rein in the worst abuses of the health care industry. Because of you, not here in the United States of America are we going to have people who are on the streets because they get sick.

Now, along the way, we did a few other things. We signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter bill, a very simple idea that women need to get paid the same as men for the same kind of work. We finally overturned the injustice of "don't ask, don't tell," and we said that everybody can serve their country. They don't have to lie to serve the country that they love. We put two women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina Justice.

We brought back a hundred thousand troops from Iraq and ended our combat mission there because we knew that it was time.

And along the way, we had to deal with pirates. [*Laughter*] Who thought we were going to have to deal with pirates? [*Laughter*] That wasn't in my campaign platform. [*Laughter*] Pandemic, earthquakes. Now——

Audience member. Oil spill.

The President. Oil spill. Don't forget oil spills. Golly. [*Laughter*]

Now, part of the hopefulness and the anticipation we all felt that night in Grant Park was also about what we could do to secure and restore America's standing in the world. So that's why we strengthened our alliances. We signed

historic arms control agreements, secured loose nuclear materials. That's why we're on the right side of history now throughout the Middle East, because we believe in preventing innocents from getting slaughtered, and we believe in human rights for all people.

That's why we've taken the fight to Al Qaida. That's why we're still working in Iraq to make sure that that transitions to a peaceful democracy. That's why we're taking care of those veterans when they come home because that is a sacred obligation that we have.

So here's the point, Chicago. We have faced an extraordinary array of challenges at home and around the world, but we wouldn't have made any of this progress if it hadn't been for you. I was talking to a group earlier, and I said, you know, I grew up here in Chicago. I wasn't born here. [*Laughter*] Just want to be clear. I was born in Hawaii. [*Laughter*] But I became a man here in Chicago. And a lot of the people who are here today—the values, the ideals, my beliefs, my core convictions about what makes America great were forged here.

Because it's here, in this incredibly diverse city, that people from every background, every creed, every color, from farm towns and inner-city neighborhoods that somehow come together, immigrants from all around the world—it is here that I was reminded about why America's so great.

It's not the size of our skyscrapers. It's not the size of our GDP. It's the fact that we're able to keep two ideas together at the same time: One, that we're all individuals endowed with certain inalienable rights and liberties and we're self-reliant and we're entrepreneurs and we don't want folks telling us what to do. That's part of—being an individual is so important to us. But we also have this idea that we're all in this together; that we look out for one another; that I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper; that I want to make sure that child on the South Side or the West Side or out in Maywood or out in Dolton, that they've got the same opportunities that I've had; and that I'm looking after them not out of charity, but because my life is richer, my life is better when the people around me are happy and the people around me have a shot at the American Dream.

And those values that all of you helped to form in me, I carried those with me to the White House. I wake up every day with them, and I go to bed every night with them. I'm thinking about you.

And when I read those letters every night from constituents all across the country and they talk about what it's like to send out 16 résumés and not get an answer back; and the desperation that a parent feels thinking they might not be able to take care of their kids; or a child writing a letter saying their parents are losing their home and they're going to have to move, and, "Mr. President, is there something that you can do?"—when I'm thinking about those things, I'm also thinking back here, thinking back home, about what you've taught me.

See, that campaign in 2008, it wasn't my campaign, it was your campaign. It was about your best instincts, your best impulses, your vision for an America that is more fair and more just and more equal and has opportunity for everybody, regardless of color, regardless of race, regardless of creed, regardless of religion, regardless of sexual orientation.

If you hadn't knocked on all those doors, if you hadn't called up all your friends back in 2008, I wouldn't be here. But you know what, we didn't come here tonight just to go down memory lane. We didn't come here tonight just to pat ourselves on the back. We came here tonight because we know that for all the progress we've made, we've still got business to do. We are not finished. And the only way we're going to finish is the same way we began this journey, and that is together.

We're going to have to keep on working. Together, we've got to make sure any American who's looking for work can find a job that pays the bills. Together, we've got to make sure that hard-working families that are doing everything right aren't falling behind, but getting ahead. We've got to reclaim the American Dream for all Americans.

That's the change we still believe in. That's what I think about every single day. That's our north star. That's our destination. And we're

not there yet. With your help, we can keep American on track, though.

With your help, we'll attract new jobs and new businesses to our shores. We'll make sure America isn't just competing, but we're competing to win in this economy. With your help, we're going to make sure all our kids are ready for college, all our kids are ready for careers. Because a world-class education is the single most important factor in whether America succeeds in the 21st century.

With your help, we can rebuild our crumbling infrastructure, not just our roads and our bridges, but our high-speed rail lines and our communications networks. With your help, we can continue to invest in cutting-edge medical research and breakthrough technologies and finally have an energy policy that makes sure that our entire economy isn't subject to 4- or 5-dollar-a-gallon gas, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and clean up the planet in the process so we can bequeath to our children and our grandchildren the kind of planet that we inherited. With your help, we can outeducate and outinnovate and outcompete the rest of the world.

And we can only do all this, by the way, if we get our fiscal issues under control. I gave a speech about this yesterday. When I was running for President, I talked about a new era of responsibility in this country. And part of that means restoring some common sense about our Federal finances, restoring fiscal discipline in Washington, living within our means.

Last week, we were able to prevent a Government shutdown. And the reason we were able to do it was because we agreed to spending cuts, but we insisted on protecting investments in things like education and medical research. But now we've got to rein in this long-term deficit and deal with this long-term debt because it threatens our financial stability. We won't be able to do all those good things if we don't get our fiscal house in order.

But if we don't deal with these issues, all the issues we care about, we're not going to be able to solve. Educating our kids, caring for our sick, looking after our seniors and our poor, all of that will be threatened. So yesterday I tried to lay out a vision for how we tackle this problem. We need to build on the compromises we made last week, but we can't compromise on our investments to grow, the investments we need to create jobs.

We've got to reform defense spending. We've got to reform health care spending. But we're not going to sacrifice our fundamental commitment that we made to one another through Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security, the safety net for our people.

And we need to bring some balance to our Tax Code. Back in December, I agreed to extend the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, as much as I disliked it, because it was the only way to prevent a tax hike on the middle class. But the fact is, we can't afford $1 trillion of tax cuts for folks like me. Not now. Not now, not when so many other Americans are struggling, not when our deficits are so high.

I think Americans like Michelle and me, we've been blessed. This country has given so much to us. We can afford to do a little bit more to make sure that every child in this country has opportunity and every senior is looked after. I think that's something that we can do.

That's our vision for America. We've got a big vision for America, of a compassionate America and a caring America and an ambitious America, not a small America. It's a vision where we're living within our means, but we're still investing in our future; where everyone makes sacrifices, no one bears all the burden; where we live up to the idea that no matter who we are or what we look like, no matter whether our ancestors landed on Ellis Island or came here on slave ships or across the Rio Grande, we are connected to one another; that I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper. In this country, we rise and fall together.

That's the idea at the heart of America. That's why we're going to keep on fighting for immigration reform, because we can't have a nation that forgets its immigrant roots. We can have a nation that is a nation of laws, but also a nation of immigrants.

This idea of bringing everyone together and making sure that everybody's contributing,

everybody's responsible, but everybody also looks out for one another, that's the idea at the heart of our last campaign. That's the idea at the heart of this campaign. That's the idea at the heart of America.

This is not my campaign, this is your campaign. And I've got to tell you, there's going to come a time when I'll fully engage in this race. When the time comes, I will be campaigning. [*Laughter*] I'll be ready to go. But I've got to tell you, right now I still have this day job—[*laughter*].

Audience member. You're doing the big stuff.

The President. And that's why I'm going to need your help now more than ever. This campaign is still in its early stages, but now's the time when you can help shape it to make sure it gets out of the gate strong.

We've—let me tell you, I'm grayer, and I'm a little dinged up. [*Laughter*] I know there are times where some of you have felt frustrated because we've had to compromise with the Republicans on some issues. There have been times—people are frustrated because we didn't get everything done in the first 2 years. There have been times where I felt the same way you do. But you know what, we knew this would not be easy.

We knew that on a journey like this, there are going to be setbacks, there are going to be detours, there are going to be times where you stumble. But we also knew something else. We knew that at each and every juncture in our history, when our future was on the line, when we were on—at a crossroads like we are now, the country came together. We were able to make the changes that we needed.

That's what earlier generations did in Lexington and Concord and Selma and Stonewall. That's what did—so many of you did out in cornfields in Iowa, polling places in Wrigleyville. And that's what I need each and every one of you to remember and do one more time, not for me, but for us, for the future we hold in common, for the better days that lie ahead.

So whenever you hear people say our problems are too big to solve or we can't bring about the changes we seek, I want you to think about all the progress we've already made. I think—I want you to think about all the unfinished business that lies ahead. I want you to be excited about the future that lies before us. And I want to remind you, and I want you to remind everybody else, of those simple words that summed up what we believe as a people: Yes, we can.

Thank you. Go Bulls!

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:16 p.m. at the Navy Pier. In his remarks, he referred to Ernest Banks, former shortstop and first baseman, Major League Baseball's Chicago Cubs; Benjamin R. "B.J." Armstrong, Jr., former guard, and Derrick M. Rose, guard, National Basketball Association's Chicago Bulls; Joakim Noah, center, Chicago Bulls, and his mother Cecilia Rodhe; Rashard Mendenhall, running back, National Football League's Pittsburgh Steelers; musicians Colbie Caillat and Usher Raymond IV; and Supreme Court Associate Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia M. Sotomayor.

Statement on Signing the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011
April 15, 2011

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1473, the "Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011".

Section 1112 of the Act bars the use of funds for the remainder of fiscal year 2011 to transfer Guantanamo detainees into the United States, and section 1113 bars the use of funds for the remainder of fiscal year 2011 to transfer detainees to the custody or effective control of foreign countries unless specified conditions are met. Section 1112 represents the continuation of a dangerous and unprecedented challenge to critical executive branch authority to determine when and where to prosecute Guantanamo de-

tainees, based on the facts and the circumstances of each case and our national security interests. The prosecution of terrorists in Federal court is a powerful tool in our efforts to protect the Nation and must be among the options available to us. Any attempt to deprive the executive branch of that tool undermines our Nation's counterterrorism efforts and has the potential to harm our national security.

With respect to section 1113 of the Act, the restrictions on the transfer of detainees to the custody or effective control of foreign countries interfere with the authority of the executive branch to make important and consequential foreign policy and national security determinations regarding whether and under what circumstances such transfers should occur in the context of an ongoing armed conflict. We must have the ability to act swiftly and to have broad flexibility in conducting our negotiations with foreign countries. The executive branch has sought and obtained from countries that are prospective recipients of Guantanamo detainees assurances that they will take or have taken measures reasonably designed to be effective in preventing, or ensuring against, returned detainees taking action to threaten the United States or engage in terrorist activities. Consistent with existing statutes, the executive branch has kept the Congress informed about these assurances and notified the Congress prior to transfers. Requiring the executive branch to certify to additional conditions would hinder the conduct of delicate negotiations with foreign countries and therefore the effort to conclude detainee transfers in accord with our national security.

Despite my continued strong objection to these provisions, I have signed this Act because of the importance of avoiding a lapse in appropriations for the Federal Government, including our military activities, for the remainder of fiscal year 2011.

Nevertheless, my Administration will work with the Congress to seek repeal of these restrictions, will seek to mitigate their effects, and will oppose any attempt to extend or expand them in the future.

Section 2262 of the Act would prohibit the use of funds for several positions that involve providing advice directly to the President. The President has well-established authority to supervise and oversee the executive branch, and to obtain advice in furtherance of this supervisory authority. The President also has the prerogative to obtain advice that will assist him in carrying out his constitutional responsibilities, and do so not only from executive branch officials and employees outside the White House, but also from advisers within it.

Legislative efforts that significantly impede the President's ability to exercise his supervisory and coordinating authorities or to obtain the views of the appropriate senior advisers violate the separation of powers by undermining the President's ability to exercise his constitutional responsibilities and take care that the laws be faithfully executed. Therefore, the executive branch will construe section 2262 not to abrogate these Presidential prerogatives.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
April 15, 2011.

NOTE: H.R. 1473, approved April 15, was assigned Public Law No. 112–10.

Message on the Observance of Passover
April 15, 2011

My family and I send our warmest wishes to all those celebrating the sacred festival of Passover.

On Monday evening, Jewish families and their friends in America, Israel, and around the world will gather around the Seder table and retell the story of the Exodus, one of the most powerful stories of suffering and redemption in history. The story of Passover—which recalls the passage of the children of Israel from bondage and repression to freedom and liberty—inspires hope that those oppressed and enslaved

can become free. The Seder, with its rich traditions and rituals, instructs each generation to remember its past, while appreciating the beauty of freedom and the responsibility it entails.

This year, that ancient instruction is reflected in the daily headlines as we see modern stories of social transformation and liberation unfolding in the Middle East and North Africa. Against the backdrop of change, we continue to pray for peace between Israel and her neighbors, while reaffirming our enduring commitment to Israel's security.

As Jewish families gather for this joyous celebration of freedom, let us all be thankful for the gifts that have been bestowed upon us, and let us work to alleviate the suffering, poverty, injustice, and hunger of those who are not yet free. *Chag Sameach.*

BARACK OBAMA

The President's Weekly Address
April 16, 2011

This week, I laid out my plan for our fiscal future. It's a balanced plan that reduces spending and brings down the deficit, putting America back on track toward paying down our debt.

We know why this challenge is so critical. If we don't act, a rising tide of borrowing will damage our economy, costing us jobs and risking our future prosperity by sticking our children with the bill.

At the same time, we have to take a balanced approach to reducing our deficit, an approach that protects the middle class, our commitments to seniors, and job-creating investments in things like education and clean energy. What's required is an approach that draws support from both parties and one that's based on the values of shared responsibility and shared prosperity.

Now, one plan put forward by some Republicans in the House of Representatives aims to reduce our deficit by $4 trillion over the next 10 years. But while I think their goal is worthy, I believe their vision is wrong for America.

It's a vision that says at a time when other nations are hustling to outcompete us for the jobs and businesses of tomorrow, we have to make drastic cuts in education, infrastructure, and clean energy, the very investments we need to win that competition and get those good jobs.

It's a vision that says in order to reduce the deficit, we have to end Medicare as we know it and make cuts to Medicaid that would leave millions of seniors, poor children, and Americans with disabilities without the care they need.

But even as this plan proposes these drastic cuts, it would also give $1 trillion in tax breaks to the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans, an extra $200,000 for every millionaire and billionaire in the country.

I don't think that's right. I don't think it's right to ask seniors to pay thousands more for health care or ask students to postpone college just so we don't have to ask those who have prospered so much in this land of opportunity to give back a little more.

To restore fiscal responsibility, we all need to share in the sacrifice, but we don't have to sacrifice the America we believe in.

That's why I've proposed a balanced approach that matches that $4 trillion in deficit reduction. It's an approach that combs the entire budget for savings and asks everyone to do their part. And I've called on Democrats and Republicans to join me in this effort, to put aside their differences to help America meet this challenge. That's how we've balanced our budget before, and it's how we'll succeed again.

We'll build on the savings we made from last week's bipartisan budget agreement while protecting the job-creating investments that are critical to our future.

We'll find additional savings in our defense budget. Over the last 2 years, the Secretary of Defense has taken on wasteful spending that does nothing to protect our troops or our Nation, saving $400 billion in current and future spending. I believe we can do that again.

We'll reduce health care spending and strengthen Medicare and Medicaid through

commonsense reforms that will get rid of wasteful subsidies and increase in efficiency.

We'll reduce spending in our Tax Code with tax reform that's fair and simple so that the amount of taxes you pay doesn't depend on how clever an accountant you can afford. And we should end the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans too, because people like me don't need another tax cut.

So that's my approach to reduce the deficit by $4 trillion over the next 12 years while protecting the middle class, keeping our promise to seniors, and securing our investments in our future. I hope you'll check it out for yourself on whitehouse.gov. And while you're there, you can also find what we're calling the taxpayer receipt. For the first time ever, there's a way for you to see exactly how and where your tax dollars are spent and what's really at stake in this debate.

Going forward, Democrats and Republicans in Washington, we'll have our differences, some of them strong. But you expect us to bridge those differences. You expect us to work together and get this done. And I believe we can. I believe we can live within our means and live up to the values we share as Americans. And in the weeks to come, I'll work with anyone who's willing to get it done.

Thanks for listening, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:15 p.m. on April 15 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on April 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 15, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 16.

Remarks on Presenting the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the United States Air Force Academy Falcons
April 18, 2011

The President. Thank you. Well, everybody, please be seated. Welcome to the White House, and congratulations on winning the Commander in Chief Trophy.

For the first time in 8 long years, this trophy is going back to Colorado Springs. Today we're honored to be joined by the Superintendent of the Air Force Academy, Lieutenant General Michael Gould, and the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Norton Schwartz. Thank you both for being here. Very much appreciate it.

Most of all, though, I want to congratulate the cadets who are standing behind me. Until this year, no one on this team knew what it felt like to beat Army, to beat Navy, to visit the White House, and to earn football bragging rights over the other branches. Now you know the feeling. They also know what it feels like not just to be a good service academy team, but to be a good team, period. Put up 350 rushing yards against Oklahoma, finished 9–4 after what Coach Calhoun called the toughest schedule a service academy ever played, and to cap it all off, to win in a bowl game against Georgia Tech. That's impressive. Georgia Tech has three times as many students.

Of course, I hear the victory that was sweetest of all was finally beating that Navy team. I'm told that as soon as the final whistle blew, the loudspeakers started blasting Etta James singing "At Last." [*Laughter*] The entire cadet wing—usually some of the most disciplined young men and women you'll ever see—just rushed the field and sang the alma mater with the team.

So this is a group that has a lot to be proud of. But obviously, the most impressive thing about these young men, the thing that sets them apart, is that being a football player isn't what defines them. They're airmen first. And more important than any bowl game or trophy is the commitment that they've made to serve this country.

That's why last summer, when almost every other Division I team was working out and running through drills together, these players were scattered around the world learning the

skills they needed long after they take off their jerseys and hang up their helmets.

Quarterback Tim Jefferson was at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware learning about C–17s. Tight end Josh Freeman was stationed in Japan. Cornerback Reggie Rembert was getting up every morning at 3 a.m. to take summer classes, command a squadron of 127 freshman cadets, and spend whatever time he had left organizing 7-on-7 practices for players that were still in town.

And sometimes, being away from their teammates meant that players had to come up with some creative ways to get in shape. Quarterbacks had to find people to throw to. Receivers had to find people to throw to them. The conditions weren't always ideal. But as Coach Calhoun, a former Falcon himself, said, "The good ones will find a way."

This team found a way. And now that the season's over, these seniors will have to adjust to a very different life as they become part of the finest military that the world has ever known. It won't always be easy. I've heard linemen like Tyler Schonsheck had to drop 40 or 50 pounds in order to fit in an ejection seat for pilot training this summer. Where is this guy? [*Laughter*] Yeah. Yeah, that's a big guy.

But cadets know that what's expected of them is to do whatever it takes. And I know that the camaraderie, the work ethic, the brotherhood that all of you have built as part of this team will serve you well as you defend freedom around the world. As President, I have no greater honor, no greater responsibility than serving as your Commander in Chief. And as all of you begin your service to our Nation, I want you to know that we are going to do everything in our power to help you succeed and help you come home safe. You all make us incredibly proud.

So again, congratulations, and God bless you.

Head Coach Troy Calhoun. Thank you again, Mr. President; for everybody in attendance here today.

And undoubtedly, these are absolutely remarkable young people, and with the accolades the President covered, they're on the field quite, quite impressive. And yet their greatest achievements, their greatest deeds, their greatest quality of work will begin 37 days from now when these young men graduate from the United States Air Force Academy and have an opportunity to be a part of the finest team there is, and that is to lead, to be an officer for the United States of America.

And, Mr. President, at this time, we have a couple of young men that want to share a couple of gifts with you, sir. So first of all, Mr. Jared Tew, our starting fullback.

The President. That's it.

Cadet Jared Tew. Mr. President, we'd like to present you with a official Air Force football with your name on it and the scores of both the Army and Navy game. [*Laughter*]

The President. There you go. [*Laughter*]

Cadet Reggie Rembert. Also, sir, we'd like to present you with an official Obama jersey. We were going to go with number one because there's no number one on the Air Force Falcon football team, because there's only one "one" in our hearts, and that's the Air Force One. Also we were going to go with 44, but Navy did that last year, so we don't—we didn't want to go with that. [*Laughter*] So we wanted to be a little bit more personal, so we gave the President—Mr. President, we gave him number 23 because he's actually worn this and played a sport in this number.

The President. My old number, before Michael Jordan, by the way. [*Laughter*]

Cadet Rembert. Yes, sir.

The President. Thank you. Thank you very much, everybody. Enjoy this wonderful day. Thank you. Let's get a good picture here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Michael J. Jordan, former guard, National Basketball Association's Chicago Bulls.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Executive Order Prohibiting Certain Transactions With Respect to North Korea
April 18, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that takes additional steps to address the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008, and expanded in Executive Order 13551 of August 30, 2010.

In 2008, upon terminating the exercise of certain authorities under the Trading With the Enemy Act (TWEA) with respect to North Korea, the President issued Executive Order 13466 and declared a national emergency pursuant to IEEPA to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the existence and risk of the proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula. Executive Order 13466 continued certain restrictions on North Korea and North Korean nationals that had been in place under TWEA.

In 2010, I determined that the Government of North Korea's continued provocative actions destabilized the Korean Peninsula and imperiled U.S. Armed Forces, allies, and trading partners in the region, and warranted the imposition of additional sanctions, and I issued Executive Order 13551, expanding the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466. In Executive Order 13551, I ordered blocked the property and interests in property of three North Korean entities and one individual listed in the Annex to that order and provided criteria under which the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may designate additional persons whose property and interests in property shall be blocked.

The United Nations Security Council, in Resolutions 1718 and 1874, requires Member States to take certain measures to prevent, among other transactions, the importation of certain goods and services from North Korea. The sanctions contained in Executive Order 13551 strengthen the implementation of these Resolutions.

I have issued the order today to further address the national emergency with respect to North Korea and ensure implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874. The order also complements executive authorities under section 73 of the Arms Export Control Act to ensure that all imports from North Korea are consistent with the import restrictions described in that provision, even when relevant designations under that provision are not in effect. To accomplish these goals, the order prohibits the direct or indirect importation of goods, services, and technology from North Korea. Unless exempt, all imports into the United States from North Korea must be authorized.

The order leaves in place all existing sanctions imposed under Executive Orders 13466 and 13551.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA and the United Nations Participation Act as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. In particular, this delegated authority may be used to establish a process to consider licenses for imports from North Korea that are consistent with the purposes of the order.

The order is effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern daylight time on April 19, 2011. All executive agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the order I have issued.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at an Easter Prayer Breakfast
April 19, 2011

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Please, please have a seat. Well, it is absolutely wonderful to be here with all of you today. I see so many good friends all around the room.

Before I begin, I want to acknowledge one particular member of my administration who I'm extraordinarily proud of and does not get much credit, and that is USAID Administrator Dr. Raj Shah, who is doing great work with faith leaders. Where's Raj? Where is he? There he is right there. Raj is doing great work with faith leaders on our Feed the Future global hunger program, as well as on a host of other issues. We could not be prouder of the work that he's doing. I also want to acknowledge Congressman Mike McIntyre and his wife Dee. Mike—[*applause*]—as some of you know, obviously, North Carolina was ravaged by storms this past weekend, and our thoughts and prayers are with all the families who have been affected down there. I know that Mike will be helping those communities rebuild after the devastation.

To all the faith leaders and the distinguished guests that are here today, welcome to our second annual—I'm going to make it annual. [*Laughter*] Why not? Second Easter prayer breakfast. The Easter egg roll, that's well established. [*Laughter*] The prayer breakfast we started last year, in part because it gave me a good excuse to bring together people who have been such extraordinary influences in my life and such great friends. And it gives me a chance to meet and make some new friends here in the White House.

I wanted to host this breakfast for a simple reason, because as busy as we are, as many tasks as pile up, during this season, we are reminded that there's something about the resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ that puts everything else in perspective.

We all live in the hustle and bustle of our work. And everybody in this room has weighty responsibilities, from leading churches and denominations to helping to administer important Government programs to shaping our culture in various ways. And I admit that my plate has been full as well. [*Laughter*] The inbox keeps on accumulating. [*Laughter*]

But then comes Holy Week: the triumph of Palm Sunday, the humility of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, his slow march up that hill, and the pain and the scorn and the shame of the cross.

And we're reminded that in that moment, he took on the sins of the world—past, present, and future—and he extended to us that unfathomable gift of grace and salvation through his death and resurrection.

In the words of the Book Isaiah: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

This magnificent grace, this expansive grace, this "Amazing Grace" calls me to reflect, and it calls me to pray. It calls me to ask God for forgiveness for the times that I've not shown grace to others, those times that I've fallen short. It calls me to praise God for the gift of our son—His Son and our Savior.

And that's why we have this breakfast. Because in the middle of these critical national debates, in the middle of our busy lives, we must always make sure that we are keeping things in perspective. Children help do that.

Audience members. Amen. [*Laughter*]

The President. A strong spouse helps do that.

Audience members. Amen.

The President. But nothing beats Scripture and the reminder of the Eternal.

So I'm honored that all of you have come here this Holy Week to join me in a spirit of

prayer, and I pray that our time here this morning will strengthen us, both individually as believers and as Americans. And with that, let me introduce my good friend, Bishop Vashti McKenzie, for our opening prayer.

[*At this point, Bishop Vashti M. McKenzie, presiding bishop of the 13th Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, came to the podium.*]

Bishop McKenzie. Thank you so much.

The President. I just had to make a quick point. You notice that these days, prayers are on an iPad. [*Laughter*] This is a hi-tech bishop here.

[*Bishop McKenzie then offered a prayer.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:39 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting and a Question-and-Answer Session in Annandale, Virginia
April 19, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody! Thank you! Everybody have a seat, have a seat.

It's good to be back. Good to be back in Annandale. Good to be back at NOVA. How is everybody doing?

I want to make a couple of acknowledgments. First of all, Congressman Gerry Connolly is here. Dr. George Gabriel, the provost of Northern Virginia Community College, is here. And the president, Bob Templin, is here.

I'm—it is great to be back. I keep on coming back because Jill Biden tells me to keep on coming back. [*Laughter*] I tend to listen to her. I always say Vice President Joe Biden's best quality is Jill Biden. [*Laughter*] Though Jill couldn't be here today because she's teaching all day, and she does not skip class for anybody, including the President of the United States. [*Laughter*]

What I want to do is just make a few quick remarks at the top, and then I'm just going to open it up for questions. This gives me a chance to get out of the immediate environs of Washington and hear directly from voters and have a conversation with them. And so I'm grateful that all of you took the time.

Last week, I laid out a plan to get America's finances in order. It was a plan for shared prosperity through shared sacrifice and shared responsibility. So before I take your questions, I want to talk a little bit about this plan briefly, because it goes to the heart of what's happening at this campus and schools like it all across America. And my plan does two big things. First, it cuts spending, and it brings down the deficit. We all know how important that is. Just like any student on a tight budget—and I'm assuming there are a few students on a tight budget here. Let's see a show of hands. Any students on a tight budget? [*Laughter*] Yes. I've been there. Just like you, America has to start living within its means.

For a long time, Washington acted like deficits didn't matter. A lot of folks promised us a free lunch. So I think everybody needs to recall, we had a surplus back in 2000, 11 short years ago, but then we cut taxes for everybody, including millionaires and billionaires. We fought two wars, and we created a new and expensive prescription drug program. And we didn't pay for any of it.

And as the saying goes, there is no such thing as a free lunch. So we were left with a big deficit as I was coming into office, and then we had the worst recession since the Great Depression. And that made it worse, because in a recession two things happen: Number one, the Federal Government helps out States and localities to prevent teacher layoffs and firefighters and police officers from being laid off, and all that costs money. It requires more money to provide additional help to people who've lost their jobs or are in danger or losing their homes. So the Federal Government is putting more money out, but because of the recession it's taking less money in tax revenues, and so that grows the depression—the deficit further.

Now, if we don't close this deficit, now that the economy has begun to grow again, if we keep on spending more than we take in, it's going to cause serious damage to our economy. Companies might be less likely to set up shop here in the United States of America. It could end up costing you more to take out a loan for a home or for a car, because if people keep on having to finance America's debt, at a certain point they're going to start charging higher interest rates. We won't be able to afford investments in education or clean energy or all the things that we care about because we know it'll help drive our economy and create jobs.

So we've got to tackle this challenge. And I believe the right way to do it is to live up to an old-fashioned principle of shared responsibility. That means everybody has to do their part.

So what my plan does is it starts with combing the budget for savings wherever we can find it. And we had a good start a few weeks ago, when both parties came together around a compromise that cut spending, but also kept the Government open and kept vital investments in things that we care about. We need to build on those savings, and I'm not going to quit until we've found every single dime of waste and misspent money. We don't have enough money to waste it right now. I promise you that. We're going to check under the cushions, you name it. [*Laughter*]

But finding savings in our domestic spending only gets you so far. We're also going to have to find savings in places like the defense budget. As your Commander in Chief, I will not cut a penny if it undermines our national security. But over the last 2 years, the Secretary of Defense, Bob Gates, has taken on wasteful spending that doesn't protect our troops, doesn't protect our Nation: old weapons systems, for example, that the Pentagon doesn't want, but Congress sometimes keeps on stuffing into the budget. Well-connected special interests get these programs stuck in the budget even though the Pentagon says we don't need these particular weapons systems.

So we've begun to cut those out. And Secretary Gates has found a lot of waste like that and has been able to save us $400 billion so far. I believe we can do that again. Four hundred billion dollars, even in Washington, that's real money. That funds a lot of Pell grants. That funds a lot of assistance for communities like this one.

We'll also reduce health care spending and strengthen Medicare and Medicaid through some commonsense reforms that will get rid of, for example, wasteful subsidies to insurance companies. Reforms that can actually improve care, like making it easier for folks to buy generic drugs or helping providers manage care for the chronically ill more effectively. And we can reform the Tax Code so that it's fair and it's simple, so that the amount of taxes you pay doesn't depend on whether you can hire a fancy accountant or not.

And we've also got to end tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. Now, let me say, this is not because we want to punish success. I suspect there are a bunch of young people in this gym that are going to end up being wealthy, and that's good. We want you to. We want you to be able to go out there and start a business and create jobs and put other people to work. That's the American way. But we are going to have to ask everybody to sacrifice. And if we're asking community colleges to sacrifice, if we're asking people who are going to see potentially fewer services in their neighborhoods to make a little sacrifice, then we can ask millionaires and billionaires to make a little sacrifice.

We can't just tell the wealthiest among us, you don't have to do a thing. You just sit there and relax, and everybody else, we're going to solve this problem. Especially when we know that the only way to pay for these tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans is by asking seniors to pay thousands of dollars more for their health care; or cutting children out of Head Start; or doing away with health insurance for millions of Americans on Medicaid, seniors in nursing homes or poor children or middle class families who may have a disabled child, an autistic child.

This is not a tradeoff that I'm willing to make. It's not a tradeoff that, I think, most Americans think is fair, no matter what party you belong to. That's not who we are as a country. We're better than that.

So that's the first part of the plan: cutting spending in a way that is fair and asks for shared responsibility. But here's the second part of the plan, and that's why I'm here at this campus today. Even as we're making sure that Government lives within its means, we've still got to invest in the future. We've still got to invest in you. We've still got to strengthen the middle class, and we've still got to grow the economy.

So yes, we're going to have to save wherever we can, and my proposal makes some tough cuts to some worthy programs and services that if we were in better times I'd continue to fund. But I'll tell you what I'm not going to do. We're not going to reduce the deficit by sacrificing investments in our infrastructure. We're not going to allow our roads and our bridges to grow more and more congested while places like China are building new roads and new airports and thousands of mile of high-speed rail. If we want businesses to locate here in the United States of America and create jobs here, we've got to make sure that America is built to compete. We've got to have the best roads. We've got to have the quickest trains. We have to have the fastest broadband networks. That's who we are.

Some folks in Washington also want to close the deficit by gutting our investments in things like clean energy or medical research or basic science. That's not a viable choice. America has always been the world's engine of innovation and discovery. That's who we are. That's how we've prospered. I don't want other countries to lead in the industries of tomorrow. I want new technologies invented here in the United States. I want new solar panels and wind turbines and fuel-efficient cars and advanced batteries all to be made right here in the United States of America. I want us to invent them right here.

I mean, let's just take energy as an example. Folks are out there dealing with gas at 4 bucks a gallon. It's just another hardship, another burden, at a time when we're just coming out of a recession and things are already pretty tight for folks. Now, whenever this happens, just like clockwork, you see politicians going in front of the cameras, and they'll say they've got a three-point plan for 2-buck-a-gallon gas. [*Laughter*] The truth is the only real solution to helping families at the pump in the medium and the long term is clean energy. That's how we'll save families money. That's how we'll reduce our dependence on foreign oil. We've got to develop new technologies to lessen our reliance on a fuel that is finite and that we've got to import from other countries, including some very unstable parts of the world. And that's why I think that cutting clean energy investments by 70 percent—70 percent, which has been proposed by some in Congress—would be such a mistake.

Finally, and I know this is near and dear to your hearts, we're not going to reduce our deficit by cutting education and eliminating college scholarships. In a world where our students face stiff competition from students from other countries, why would we make it harder for you to compete?

We see why it matters right here. More than 10,000 students at this college, at this college alone, are relying on Pell grants to help pay their tuition. It's almost 3,000 students at the Annandale campus alone, 3,000 students just at this campus. How many of you who are in the audience have gotten a Pell grant to help you pay your way? How many of you can't afford to pay another $1,000 to go to school? I know what this is like. Scholarships helped make it possible for me and for Michelle to go to college. It's fair to say I wouldn't be President if it hadn't been for somebody helping me be able to afford college. That's why I think it would be such a huge mistake to balance the budget on the backs of students, by cutting scholarships by as much as $1,000, forcing students to go without them altogether.

I just spent the last 2 years making sure that instead of giving subsidies to banks, we were giving that money directly to students in the form of more grants and better deals on their loans. I'm not going to undo that after all the work we've done over the last 2 years. That's not a smart way to close our deficit.

So that's the bottom line. Just as it would undermine our future to ignore our deficits, it would also undermine our future to ignore the

promise of students like you, young people who come to this school to get a degree in the hopes of living out a better life, giving your children and your grandchildren a better life. That's the core of the debate that we're having right now. Both Democrats and Republicans agree that we should reduce the deficit. In fact, there is general agreement that we need to cut spending by about $4 trillion over the medium term. And when folks in Washington agree on anything, that's a good sign. So the debate isn't about whether we reduce our deficit. The debate is about how we reduce our deficit.

And my view is, we need to live within our means while still investing in our future, cutting where we can while investing in education, investing in innovation, investing in infrastructure, and strengthening the safety net provided by programs like Medicare so that they're there for this generation and for next generations.

And here's the good news. I believe that Democrats and Republicans can come together to get this done. It won't be easy. There are going to be some fierce disagreements. Shockingly enough, there will be some politics played along the way. [*Laughter*] There will be those who say that we're too divided, that the partisanship is too stark. But I'm optimistic. I'm hopeful. Both sides have come together before. I believe we can do it again.

And here's why this is important. Ultimately, this debate is not just about numbers on a page. It's about making sure that you can make the most of your futures, that you can find a good job and achieve the life that you're studying for in a nation that's prosperous and rich with opportunities for anybody who's willing to work hard to get ahead. That's my focus. That's what I think about first thing I wake up in the morning. That's what I think about when I go to bed at night, and that's what I think about all the hours in between.

That's why I'm going to need your help. This is probably my most important message today: I'm going to need your help. I can't afford to have all of you as bystanders in this debate. I want everybody to be in the game. I want you to hold me accountable. I want you to hold all of Washington accountable. There's a way to solve this deficit problem in an intelligent way that is fair and shares sacrifices so that we can share opportunity all across America. But I can't do that if your voices are not heard.

There are powerful voices in Washington; there are powerful lobbies and special interests in Washington. And they're going to want to reduce the deficit on your backs. And if you are not heard, that's exactly what's going to happen.

If you are heard, then we're going to meet this challenge. We are going to secure our future. We're going to make our country stronger and more prosperous than it has ever been before.

With that, I want to take some questions. Thank you very much, everybody.

All right, we've got some——

[*At this point, the President tested the microphone.*]

Testing, there we go. All right, so we've got some people in the audience, our wonderful volunteers, with microphones. When I call on you, if you could introduce yourself—wait for the microphone so we can all hear you, and then introduce yourself and try to keep the question relatively short. [*Laughter*] I will try to keep my answers relatively short. And I'm going to go boy, girl, boy, girl—[*laughter*]—just to make sure things are fair. All right?

Let me start with this young lady right there. That's right, you. Yes, you. [*Laughter*] I'll call on you too. [*Laughter*] Go ahead.

Education Reform/Federal Budget

Q. My name is Aissata Sow, and I'm a student here at NOVA. And I'd like to know your plan to cut $4 trillion in up to 12 years—is any of that toward the education budget?

The President. No, what we've done is we have actually said that even as we are making all these spending cuts, we actually think that education spending should go up a little bit. And the reason is not that money solves all the problems in education. It doesn't. But whether

it's K through 12 or higher education, money does make a difference if it's used intelligently.

So, for example, what we're doing at the K-through-12 level is we've designed a program called Race to the Top. And it's a pretty straightforward program. What it says to school districts and States all across the country is, in addition to the usual money that you get for disadvantaged kids, the usual money that you get for disabled kids—most of which is given out in formulas so it just depends on how many kids are there and how many kids are disadvantaged or disabled—we're also going to have a little bit of money that we save to give to schools and school districts that are really digging deep to reform themselves and to find new ways to improve performance.

So if you are doing a great job in recruiting and training new teachers, if you're doing a great job in lifting up schools that are underperforming—and there are about 2,000 schools in the country that are what are called dropout factories. I mean, they just are not doing the job. So if in that State you say, we've got a special plan to make sure those schools are doing a great job, if you've got innovative programs in math and science education, if you're doing some things that increase accountability, improve excellence, then we're going to give you a little extra money, but you're going to have to reform to do it.

So the idea is not just spending more money for its own sake. It's tying more money to improved performance and real reform. That's what we're doing at K through 12.

Now, what we're doing at the community college and university levels is we've redesigned some of the programs like Pell grant and student loan programs. As I mentioned, it used to be that the student loan programs used to go through banks, and they would skim billions of dollars in profits, even though they weren't really taking any risk because the Federal Government was guaranteeing the loans.

So we said, well, let's just give the money directly to students. That will give us an extra several billion dollars that we can use to provide all of you additional scholarships, higher levels for your Pell grants. But we're also working with community colleges to see can we make sure that the programs at the community colleges are as effective as they can be to provide the training and the skills you need to succeed.

So, for example, one of the things that we're doing is identifying where are the jobs of the future. Can we get the private sector and businesses to help design curriculums ahead of time so that young people when they go through, and if they're taking out these loans and making these big investments, they know there's going to be a job at the end of the tunnel?

So we need more money, but we also need more reform. And in order to provide more money for education, we're having to make some cuts in some other areas that are going to be difficult in some cases. I mean, I just mentioned the defense budget, for example. There are certain aspects of the defense budget that I will not touch. For example, making sure that our troops have the equipment they need to be safe when they're in theater, making sure that when they come home, veterans are getting the help that they need for posttraumatic stress disorder or to be able to go to college themselves.

So there are certain commitments that we make to our men and women in uniform that are sacred, and we can't cut back on those. But as I said, there are some weapons systems that just don't work. There are some that may work, but we don't need. There are some that we just can't afford. So we're going to have to make some difficult decisions on some of those issues.

And let's face it, there are also some social service programs that don't work. I mean, one of the things that I always say is if you're really progressive, you've got to be willing to examine whether something that you're paying for is actually working, because if it isn't working, that money could be used somewhere else to help people. So we've got to have a much more rigorous review of how effective various programs are. Some work, and some don't. And if they don't work, we should eliminate them and put that money into programs that do. Okay? All right.

It's the gentleman's turn, right back there. Yes.

Medicare/Health Care Reform/Cost of Prescription Drugs

Q. Hi, Mr. President. I've lived overseas for the last 15 years, and there has been very good medical care, but now that I'm here back in the States and on Medicare, I find something interesting, and that is that Medicare won't pay for any expenses overseas; it has to be here in this country, and that costs you money, the Government, and it costs me money, but it's good, of course, for the health care industry. Would you be interested in changing that?

The President. Well, I think you're raising an interesting point. First of all, Medicare is one of the most important pillars of our social safety net. And so before I get to your specific point, I want everybody to understand what the debate right now about Medicare that's taking place between Democrats and Republicans is, because you're going to need this as this debate unfolds over the next several months.

The House Republicans just passed a proposal, and their main plan to reduce our long-term deficits and debt is to turn Medicare into a voucher program. What would happen would be that right now seniors, when they get—once they're on Medicare, you basically are able to get the care that you need, and Medicare covers it for you. What would happen under this proposal is you'd get a set amount of money; you could then go out under the private market place and buy insurance, but if the voucher you were getting for 6 or $7,000 and the insurance company said it's going to cost you $12,000, well, you're going to have to make up that difference.

And so it's estimated by the Congressional Budget Office, which is an independent, bipartisan sort of referee in Congress that determines these things, they figure that seniors would end up paying twice as much for their health care as they are currently—at least twice as much. And more importantly, it would get worse over time, because health care inflation goes up a lot faster than regular inflation. So your health care costs keep on going up and up and up; the voucher doesn't. Each year, more and more costs coming out of pocket.

Now, I think that is the wrong way to go. That would fundamentally change Medicare as we know it, and I'm not going to sign up for that. Having said that, we are going to have to reform Medicare and our entire health care system in order to improve quality for the amount of money that we spend, because we spend much more money in this country on health care than any other industrialized country, and our outcomes aren't better.

And that's what we started doing with health care reform last year. Essentially, what we said was let's not just dump these additional costs on seniors. I mean, it's not hard to save the Government money if you're willing to just say, here, you pay for it. That's not a solution. The question is, how do we actually make health care costs lower overall? That means that we work with providers to say, how can you do a better job providing care to the chronically ill?

About 15, 20 percent of the patients account for 80 percent of the costs because they have chronic illnesses like diabetes. Can we incentivize providers, doctors, hospitals to do a better job monitoring those illnesses, preventing those illnesses, treating those illnesses in a comprehensive way so that the overall costs to the system go down? Can we stop with the five or six tests, all of which cost money, and just give you one test and have them—the results e-mailed to everybody that you need to deal with? That can save us money.

So there are a whole host of steps that we can take that could make a big difference in reducing health care costs overall. And keep in mind, even if you're not on Medicare, the overall costs of health care are being driven up for you and for—even if you're on private health care, it's—you're paying about $1,000 per family in extra costs because of all the uncompensated care that comes in, all the folks who show up at the emergency room, all the medical errors that take place at hospitals that end up costing the system money as a whole. So if we can squeeze those inefficiencies out of the health care system, then we can maintain Medicare as we know it, but still reduce the

cost to the Federal Government and to everybody in society.

Now——

[*Something fell in the background.*]

Uh-oh. [*Laughter*] We don't need any health care, do we? Nobody fell.

To get to your question, then, my preference would be that you don't have to travel to Mexico or India to get cheap health care. I'd like you to be able to get it right here in the United States of America that's high quality.

So before we went on the path of, you can go somewhere else to get your health care, let's work to see if we can reduce the costs of health care here in the United States of America. That's going to make a big difference. And Medicare is a good place to start because Medicare is such a big purchaser that if we can start changing how the health care system works inside of Medicare, then the entire system changes. All the doctors, all the hospitals, they will all adapt to these best practices.

And the same is true, by the way, for prescription drugs. I mean, one of the things that we want to do as part of our health care reform package is let's start doing a better job of negotiating better prices for prescription drugs here in the United States so that you don't feel like you're getting cheated because you're paying 30 percent more or 20 percent more than prescription drugs in Canada or Mexico.

Reimportation is a short-term solution that a lot of seniors are resorting to, but why should drugs that are invented here in the United States end up being more expensive than another country? Well, the reason is, is because drug companies can get away with it here and they can't get away with it there, and we should change some of those systems to make it cheaper for everybody here. But that's going to make a huge difference in terms of reducing our deficit.

So thank you.

All right, it's a young lady's turn, right here. Hold on, let's—can we get a mike over here, or do I need to lend her my mike? Okay.

Social Security/Federal Budget

Q. Hi, Mr. President. My name is Benita Griffin. I'm a late student here at Northern Virginia Community College. I'm in my second career now. My question is, in about 15 years, I'll be eligible for Medicare—I mean, for Social Security. And I'm part of the baby boomer generation, and I don't know if there will be Social Security when I get ready to—and I probably won't retire for another 25 years, I'm thinking.

The President. Yes, you look pretty young. [*Laughter*] You look like you're—you look like you've got a lot of career left in you.

Q. I'm about your age. But yes, so I figure another 25 years I'll be working. But I don't know if it will be there when I need it, and I'm concerned about that.

The President. Well, let me talk about Social Security. The big drivers of our deficit are health care costs. I mean, the thing that we've really got to get control of is Medicare and Medicaid. That's what's skyrocketing really fast. Because not only is the population getting older, but health care costs are just going up a lot faster than people's wages and salaries or tax revenues to the Federal Government.

Social Security is a problem, but one that we can solve much more easily. So the first answer to your question is, I—Social Security will definitely be there when you retire. I'm absolutely confident about that. [*Applause*] I am absolutely confident about that.

Now, here's the thing. If we don't do anything on Social Security, if we just don't—if we don't touch it at all, then what would happen is, by the time you retire, or maybe just a couple years after you retire, you might find that instead of getting every dollar that you were counting on, you're only getting 75 cents out of that dollar. Because what's happening is the population is getting older, there are more retirees per worker, and more money starts going out than is coming in.

So we do have to stabilize Social Security's finances, but we can do that with some relatively modest changes, unlike health care, where we've got to get in and work with providers and

really get some much more substantial reforms. With Social Security, it's just a matter of tweaking how it currently works.

Now, politically, it's hard to do. Politically, it's hard to do. For example, I'll just give you one example of a change that would make a difference in Social Security. Right now you only pay a Social Security tax up to a certain point of your income. So a little bit over $100,000, your Social Security—you don't pay Social Security tax.

Now, how many people are making less than $100,000 a year? Don't be bashful. [*Laughter*] The point is, for the vast majority of Americans, every dime you earn, you're paying some in Social Security. But for Warren Buffett, he stops paying at a little bit over $100,000, and then the next 50 billion, he's not paying a dime in Social Security taxes.

So if we just made a little bit of an adjustment in terms of the cap on Social Security, that would do a significant amount to stabilize the system. And that's just an example of the kinds of changes that we can make.

So we are going to have to make some changes in Social Security, but it's not the major driver of our deficit. And what I've proposed is let's work on Social Security, but let's not confuse that with this major budget debate that we're having about how we deal with both spending and revenues, because that is the problem that is going to require some really hard work and some bipartisan cooperation. Okay?

All right. It's a gentleman—gentleman in the white shirt right there in the middle. You got three guys right in a row; I'm choosing the guy right in the middle. There you go, right there.

Price of Gasoline/Oil Supply/Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources and Technologies

Q. Mr. President, my name is Mitchell Holloman. I'm a student here at NOVA, electrical and computer engineering. And I'm really concerned about the clean energy solutions because with the deficit that we have, most of those solutions and alternatives are far more expensive than the things that we have in place now. So how are we going to reduce the deficit and, at the same time, develop clean energy alternatives as well as removing the current systems that we have in place that are dependent on oil and other things from other countries?

The President. Well, it's a great question. And so let me start with gas prices because I know that that's on everybody's minds, and it'll—you can sit down. [*Laughter*] I'll admit to you, it's been a while since I filled up at the tank—filled up at the pump. [*Laughter*] You know, Secret Service doesn't let me get out—[*laughter*]—and they don't let me drive anymore.

But it wasn't that long ago that I did have to fill up my gas tank. And I know that if you've got a limited budget and you just watch that hard-earned money going away to oil companies that will once again probably make record profits this quarter, it's pretty frustrating. And if you're driving, out of necessity, 50 miles a day to work and you can't afford to buy some fancy new hybrid car, so you're stuck with the old beater that is getting you 8 miles a gallon, that's pretty frustrating.

Now, I wish I could tell you that there was some easy, simple solution to this. It is true that a lot of what's driving oil prices up right now is not the lack of supply. There's enough supply. There's enough oil out there for world demand. The problem is, is that oil is sold on these world markets, and speculators and people make various bets, and they say, you know what, we think that maybe there's a 20-percent chance that something might happen in the Middle East that might disrupt oil supply, so we're going to bet that oil is going to go up real high. And that spikes up prices significantly.

We're now in a position where we can investigate if there's unfair speculation. We're going to be monitoring gas stations to make sure there isn't any price gouging that's taking advantage of consumers. But the truth is that it is a world commodity, and when prices spike up like this, there aren't a lot of short-term solutions. What we have are medium- and long-term solutions.

Now, one solution is making sure that we're increasing production of U.S. oil. And we have

actually continually increased U.S. production, so U.S. production is as high as it's ever been. The problem is we only have about 2 to 3 percent of the world's oil reserves and we use 25 percent of the world's oil. So when you say we should be using traditional sources, the problem is we've got finite sources when it comes to oil. And that means we've got to find some replacements.

There are a couple of alternatives. One are biofuels. I was down in Brazil; a third of their cars are run on biofuels, mostly ethanol made out of sugar cane. We should be able to develop technologies where we are building more efficient biofuels than we're currently using. Right now we use—most of our ethanol comes from corn. It would be better if we can get farmers to work with industry to figure out whether we can use woodchips or algae or switchgrass or other biomass that can create fuel that is competitive with gasoline. So that's point number one.

Point number two is we should be looking at electric cars and how can we produce more effective electric cars, cheaper electric cars, here in the United States. There's—technologically, it's now feasible to get a car that runs 150 miles a gallon or maybe no gallons of gas. And you just get your car, you plug it in at night in your garage; whatever energy is stored in your car battery goes back into your house, and then, when you come back out at night, it's recharged and you're ready to go.

You're right, right now, that hybrid cars and electric cars are more expensive than regular cars, but partly, that's because we haven't increased demand enough for it that the unit costs have gone down. And the more you produce of something, the cheaper it gets, right?

You remember what it used to cost you for a flat-screen TV or a laptop computer. But as volume picked up, technology improves, costs go down. Well, the same thing could be true for electric cars, so one of the things we're trying to do is to increase demand on electric cars.

It turns out that the Federal Government has a lot of cars, so we're saying let's have the Federal Government make sure that 100 percent of our cars are energy-efficient cars to create a better market for those cars that can help drive costs down.

We've also increased fuel efficiency standards on cars for the first time in 30 years. That will save about 1.8 billion gallons—or barrels of oil, billion barrels of oil. And we can now increase fuel efficiency standards on cars and trucks, and that could make a huge difference because now consumers are just—whenever they go to buy a new car, by necessity, that car is going to have higher mileage standards. All that drives down demand and can reduce gas prices overall.

But there's one last component to this, and you just pointed out if we're going to have electric cars, we still have to have electricity, and how do we produce electricity?

Now, it's true that coal is something that's very plentiful in America. We're sort of the Saudi Arabia of coal. The challenge with coal is that although it's very cheap, it's also dirty. And it can create the kinds of air pollution that not only is contributing to climate change, but it's also creating asthma for kids nearby.

You got asthma? Okay. And so sucking that stuff in is not ideal.

So what we've said is, let's invest in clean coal technology that potentially can capture some of these particulates and some of the carbon dioxide that's going into the atmosphere. If we can do that in a energy-efficient—in a cost-efficient way, then that would be hugely helpful to us.

But we also have to look at other ways of generating electricity. It's true that solar and wind right now are more expensive than coal, for example, or natural gas. But that doesn't mean that it will always be the case, it just means that we haven't developed the technologies to maximize our ability to capture and store electricity through those means.

I just mentioned natural gas. We have a lot of natural gas here in this country. The problem is, is that extracting it from the ground, the technologies aren't as developed as we'd like and so there are some concerns that it might create pollution in our ground water, for example. So we've got to make sure that if we're going to do it, we do it in a way that doesn't poison people.

The point is, is that there's not going to be any single silver bullet. What we've got to do is develop all these energy alternatives. All of them, though, are going to require some investment in new ways of thinking, new basic science, new research. And typically, no single company is going to be making those investments because it's not profitable for them to do it.

And that means that the Federal Government historically has stepped in and said, you know what, we'll make this investment in basic research, and then we'll let somebody else commercialize it and make money on it. That's how we invented the Internet. That's how we invented the GPS system. That's how we invented the barcode.

Those were all Federal investments that eventually spread out throughout the economy and made everybody richer and better off. And that's what we've got to do with energy as well, but that requires an investment, and I'm prepared to make that investment. I think we all should be. All right? Thank you.

All right. It's a young lady's turn. Right there, yes.

Bipartisanship in Congress/Federal Budget

Q. Hi, Mr. President. I'm Dr. Rebecca Hayes. I'm a history professor at Manassas. And my question is, are you encouraged to see more of the bipartisanship like the Gang of Six that has formed recently addressing some of the very concerns you've mentioned? Do you think we're going to see more of that, and are you going to stay behind it?

The President. Well, I am encouraged that over the last 4 or 5 months we've been able to strike some deals between Democrats and Republicans that a lot of people didn't expect us to be able to do. Our conflicts and our disagreements tend to get more attention than our agreements. And the easiest way to be on TV is to call somebody a name. [*Laughter*] Right?

I mean, if you are—if you say something mean about somebody, that will get you on TV. If you say something nice about somebody, everybody—you figure that's—well, that's boring, I'm not interested.

So I think that there is a huge opportunity for us to be able to work together, particularly on this deficit issue. As I said, we now agree that it's a problem. Everybody agrees it's a problem. Everybody agrees about how much we have to lower the deficit by over the medium term and that we've got to deal with long-term health care costs in order to get this under control. So it's pretty rare where Washington says this is a problem, everybody agrees on that, and everybody agrees on about how much we need to do to solve the problem.

The big question that is going to have to be resolved is, how do we do it? And there is—I don't want to lie to you, there is a big philosophical divide right now. I believe that you've got to do it in a balanced way. I believe that you've got to, yes, have spending cuts, but you can't cut things like education or basic research or infrastructure down to the bone.

I believe that people who have been really blessed in this society like me and have a very, very, very good income can afford to pay a little bit more, nothing crazy, just go back to the rates that existed when Bill Clinton was President. That wasn't that long ago. That's a fair thing to do, especially if it makes sure that seniors are still getting their Medicare and kids are still going to Head Start. Why wouldn't I want to make that sacrifice? Look—and I think most wealthy Americans feel the same way.

I want to live in a society that's fair, not just out of charitable reasons, but because it improves my life. If there are young people out there who are going to good schools and have opportunity, if I'm not driving by and seeing homeless folks on the streets, why wouldn't I want to have a society where I knew that the American Dream was available for everybody?

So the question is, how do we achieve the same goal? Can we do it in a more balanced way? And the House Republican budget that they put forward, they didn't just not ask the wealthy to pay more, they actually cut their taxes further.

Now, we just had tax day, so nobody wants to pay taxes. Let me tell you, I looked at my tax re-

form [return],* and I thought, hmm—there is a moment there where you look at the figure you're paying, and you say, wow, I don't—let me think about my position on taxing the wealthy here. [*Laughter*] I understand that. Nobody volunteers and says, boy, I'm just wild to pay more taxes. But it's a matter of values and what we prioritize. And I certainly don't think my taxes should be even lower. That's—I think America wants a smart Government. It wants a lean government. It wants a accountable government. But we don't want no government.

I mean, according to the Republican budget that was passed, for example, we would have to eliminate transportation funding by a third. We'd have to cut transporting funding by a third. You remember when that bridge in Minnesota collapsed with all those people on it? And there was a big hue and cry: How can this happen in America? Well, the National Society of Engineers, they've looked around, and they give us a D when it comes to infrastructure. Our roads, our bridges, our sewer systems are all deteriorating.

We don't even have a serious high-speed rail infrastructure in this country. Our broadband lines are slower than places like South Korea. Well, how—so what, we cut transportation by another third, and what's going to happen to America? We're just going to have potholes everywhere? [*Laughter*] We're just going to have bridges collapsing everywhere? Are we going to continue to have airports that are substandard? Are we going to go to other countries and suddenly realize that China and South Korea and all of Europe all have better infrastructure than we do, and we think that businesses are going to come here and invest? Or do we think that at some point companies say, you know what, America has got a second-rate infrastructure, and it costs us too much money because our trucks going over those potholes are getting messed up?

So that's the choice that we're going to have to make. This debate is going to be very important though. And as I said before, I'm going to need all of you involved in this debate. You've got to make your voices heard. And I would say—I'm not just talking to Democrats here. Republicans, I want you to be able to talk to your Members of Congress and say, yes, I'm serious about reducing the deficit; yes, I want limited government; yes, I want reductions in spending, but I do think that we've got to make investments in basic research and infrastructure and education, and so let's do it in a balanced way.

And if we do that, we can come up with a compromise that is effective, that puts America's fiscal house in order, but also allows us to win the future. That's my goal. I'm going to need your help though.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. at Northern Virginia Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

Statement on the 16th Anniversary of the Oklahoma City Bombing
April 19, 2011

Sixteen years ago today, America witnessed a horrific attack in Oklahoma City, killing more than 160 men, women, and children and wounding hundreds of others. Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the families and friends who lost a loved one and suffered through this tragic event. We also need to remember the resilience and toughness of the American people and know that our Nation's resolve to fight terror and combat violent extremism in all its forms will not waver. As a nation, we should take a moment to recognize the courage and spirit of our

* White House correction.

fellow citizens, the first-responders who rushed to the site to save countless lives, and the people of the Nation, who stood together to lift up this tight-knit community. Our thoughts and prayers are never far from those who lost their lives 16 years ago.

Remarks at a Facebook Town Hall Meeting and a Question-and-Answer Session in Palo Alto, California
April 20, 2011

The President. Well, thank you so much, Facebook, for hosting this, first of all. My name is Barack Obama, and I'm the guy who got Mark to wear a jacket and tie. [*Applause*] Thank you. I'm very proud of that. [*Laughter*]

Facebook Founder and Chief Executive Officer Mark E. Zuckerberg. Second time.

The President. I know. [*Laughter*] I will say—and I hate to tell stories on Mark, but the first time we had dinner together and he wore this jacket and tie, I'd say halfway through dinner he's starting to sweat a little bit. It's really uncomfortable for him. So I helped him out of his jacket. [*Laughter*] And in fact, if you'd like, Mark, we can take our jackets off.

Mr. Zuckerberg. That's good.

The President. Woo, that's better, isn't it?

Mr. Zuckerberg. Yes, but you're a lot better at this stuff than me. [*Laughter*]

The President. So first of all, I just want to say thank you to all of you for taking the time, not only people who are here in the audience, but also folks all over the country and some around the world who are watching this town hall.

The main reason we wanted to do this is, first of all, because more and more people, especially young people, are getting their information through different media. And obviously, what all of you have built together is helping to revolutionize how people get information, how they process information, how they're connecting with each other.

And historically, part of what makes for a healthy democracy, what is a good politics, is when you've got citizens who are informed, who are engaged. And what Facebook allows us to do is make sure this isn't just a one-way conversation, make sure that not only am I speaking to you, but you're also speaking back, and we're in a conversation, we're in a dialogue. So I love doing town hall meetings. This format and this company, I think, is a ideal means for us to be able to carry on this conversation.

And as Mark mentioned, obviously, we're having a very serious debate right now about the future direction of our country. We are living through as tumultuous a time as certainly I've seen in my lifetime. Admittedly, my lifetime is a lot longer than most of yours so far. This is a pretty young crowd. But we're seeing, domestically, a whole series of challenges, starting with the worst recession we've had since the Great Depression. We're just now coming out of it. We've got all sorts of disruptions, technological disruptions that are taking place, most of which hold the promise of making our lives a lot better, but also mean that there are a lot of adjustments that people are having to make throughout the economy.

We still have a very high unemployment rate that is starting to come down, but there are a awful lot of people who are being challenged out there day in, day out, worrying about whether they can pay the bills, whether they can keep their home.

Internationally, we're seeing the sorts of changes that we haven't seen in a generation. We've got certain challenges like energy and climate change that no one nation can solve, but we're going to have to solve together. And we don't yet have all the institutions that are in place in order to do that.

But what makes me incredibly optimistic—and that's why being here at Facebook is so exciting for me—is that at every juncture in our history, whenever we've faced challenges like this, whether it's been the shift from a agricultural age to a industrial age or whether it

was facing the challenges of the cold war or trying to figure out how we make this country more fair and more inclusive, at every juncture, we've always been able to adapt. We've been able to change, and we've been able to get ahead of the curve. And that's true today as well, and you guys are at the cutting edge of what's happening.

And so I'm going to be interested in talking to all of you about why this debate that we're having around debt and our deficits is so important, because it's going to help determine whether we can invest in our future and basic research and innovation and infrastructure that will allow us to compete in the 21st century and still preserve a safety net for the most vulnerable among us.

But I'm also going to want to share ideas with you about how we can make our democracy work better and our politics work better, because I don't think there's a problem out there that we can't solve if we decide that we're going to solve it together.

And for that, I'm grateful for the opportunity to speak to you. And instead of just giving a lot of long speeches, I want to make sure that we've got time for as many questions as possible.

So, Mark, I understand you got the first one.

Deficit and National Debt/Federal Budget

Mr. Zuckerberg. Yes, let's start off. So let's start off with the conversation about the debt. Right? So I understand that yesterday morning you had a town hall in Virginia where you talked about your framework not only for resolving the short-term budget issues, but the longer term debt. And you spent some time talking about tax reform and some cost cutting, but you also spent a lot of time talking about things that you didn't think that we could cut: in education, infrastructure, and clean energy.

So my question to kind of start off is: What specifically do you think we should do and what specifically do you think we can cut in order to make this all add up?

The President. Okay. Well, let me first of all, Mark, share with you, sort of, the nature of the problem, because I think a lot of folks understand that it's a problem but aren't sure how it came about.

In 2000, at the end of the Clinton administration, we not only had a balanced budget, but we actually had a surplus. And that was in part because of some tough decisions that had made—had been made by President Clinton, Republican Congresses, Democratic Congresses, and President George H.W. Bush. And what they had said was let's make sure that we're spending wisely on the things that matter, let's spend less on things that don't matter, and let's make sure that we're living within our means, that we're taking in enough revenue to pay for some of these basic obligations.

What happened then was we went through 10 years where we forgot what had created the surplus in the first place. So we had a massive tax cut that wasn't offset by cuts in spending. We had two wars that weren't paid for. And this was the first time in history where we had gone to war and not asked for additional sacrifice from American citizens. We had a huge prescription drug plan that wasn't paid for.

And so by the time I started office, we already had about a trillion-dollar annual deficit, and we had massive accumulated debt with interest payments to boot. Then you have this huge recession. And so what happens is less revenue is coming in because company sales are lower, individuals are making less money. At the same time, there's more need out there. So we're having to help States, and we're having to help local governments.

And that's a lot of what the recovery was about, was us making sure that the economy didn't tilt over into a depression by making sure that teachers weren't laid off and firefighters weren't laid off and there was still construction for roads and so forth, all of which was expensive. I mean, that added about another trillion dollars' worth of debt.

So now what we've got is a situation, not only do we have this accumulated debt, but the baby boomers are just now starting to retire. And what's scary is not only that the baby boomers are retiring at a greater rate, which means they're making greater demands on Social Security, but primarily Medicare and Medicaid,

but health care costs go up a lot faster than inflation, and older populations use more health care costs. You put that all together, and we have an unsustainable situation.

So right now we face a critical time where we're going to have to make some decisions: How do we bring down the debt in the short term, and how do we bring down the debt over the long term?

In the short term, Democrats and Republicans now agree we've got to reduce the debt by about $4 trillion over the next 10 years. And I know that sounds like a lot of money. It is. But it's doable if we do it in a balanced way.

What I proposed was that about $2 trillion over 10 to 12 years is reduction in spending. Government wastes, just like every other major institution does, and so there are things that we do that we can afford not to do. Now, there are some things that I'd like to do, are fun to do, but we just can't afford them right now.

So we've made cuts in every area. A good example is Pentagon spending, where Congress oftentimes stuffs weapons systems in the Pentagon budget that the Pentagon itself says we don't need. But special interests and constituencies help to bloat the Pentagon budget. So we've already reduced the Pentagon budget by about $400 billion. We think we can do about another $400 billion.

So we've got to look at spending both on nonsecurity issues as well as defense spending. And then what we've said is let's take another trillion of that that we raise through a reform in the tax system that allows people like me and, frankly, you, Mark, for paying a little more in taxes. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Zuckerberg. I'm cool with that.

The President. I know you're okay with that. [*Laughter*] Keep in mind, what we're talking about is going back to the rates that existed when Bill Clinton was President. Now, a lot of you were—[*laughter*]—I'm trying to say this delicately—still in diapers at that time. [*Laughter*] But for those of you who recall, the economy was booming, and wealthy people were getting wealthier. There wasn't a problem at that time. If we go back to those rates alone, that by itself would do a lot in terms of us reducing our overall spending. And if we can get a trillion dollars on the revenue side, 2 trillion in cutting spending, we can still make investments in basic research.

We can still invest in something we call ARPA–E, which is like DARPA, except just focused on energy, so that we can figure out what are the next breakthrough technologies that can help us reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.

We can still make investments in education, so we've already expanded the Pell grant program so that more young people can go to college. We're investing more in STEM education: math and science and technology education. We can still make those investments. We can still rebuild our roads and our bridges and invest in high-speed rail and invest in the next generation of broadband and wireless and make sure everybody has access to the Internet. We can do all those things while still bringing down the deficit medium term.

Now, there's one last component of this, and I know this is a long answer, but I wanted to make sure everybody had the basic foundations for it. Even if we get this $4 trillion, we do still have a long-term problem with Medicare and Medicaid because health care costs, the inflation goes up so much faster than wages and salaries. And this is where there's another big philosophical debate with the Republicans, because what I've said is the best way for us to change it is to build on the health reform that we had last year and start getting a better bang for our health care dollar.

We waste so much on health care. We spend about 20 percent more than any other country on Earth, and we have worse outcomes because we end up having multiple tests when we could just do one test and have it shared among physicians on Facebook, for example.

We could focus on the chronically ill; 20 percent of the patients account for 80 percent of the costs. So doing something simple like reimbursing hospitals and doctors for reducing their readmissions rate and managing somebody with a chronic illness like diabetes so that they're taking their meds on a regular basis so

that they don't come to the emergency room, that saves huge amounts of money.

So that's what health care reform was about last year or a year and a half ago, and what we want to do is build on that and continue to improve the system.

What the Republicans right now are saying is, number one, they can't agree to any increases in taxes, which means we'd have to cut—out of that $4 trillion, all of it would come from education, transportation, areas that I think are critical for our long-term future.

So, for example, they proposed 70-percent cuts in clean energy. Well, I don't know how we free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil—and anybody who is paying gas prices knows that there's an economic component to this as well as an environmental component to it—if we're not investing in the basic research and technology that allows solar, wind, and others to thrive and develop.

At the same time, what they've said is, let's make Medicare into a voucher program so that retirees, instead of knowing that they're always going to have health care, they're going to get a voucher that covers part of the cost, and whatever health care inflation comes up is all going to be on them. And if the health insurance companies don't sell you a policy that covers your illnesses, you're out of luck.

I think it is very important for us to have a basic social safety net for families with kids with disabilities, for seniors, for folks who are in nursing homes, and I think it's important for us to invest in our basic research. We can do all those things, but we're only going to be able to do it by taking a balanced approach. And that's what this big debate is about—all about right now. All right?

Mr. Zuckerberg. All right, so—sorry, don't mean to cut off the applause.

The President. No, no, no.

Mr. Zuckerberg. That was a very thorough answer.

The President. No, they were stunned by the length of that answer. [*Laughter*] But it's complicated stuff.

Homeownership

Mr. Zuckerberg. So the next question is from someone watching Facebook Live. Jay Epstein from Williamsburg, Virginia, writes in and asks: "The housing crisis will not go away. The mortgage financing for new home buyers with low to moderate income is becoming very difficult. As President, what can you do to relax the policies that are disqualifying qualified home buyers from owning their first home? How can you assure the low to moderate home buyers that they will have the opportunity to own their first home?"

The President. Well, it's a good question. And I'll be honest with you, this is probably the biggest drag on the economy right now that we have, along with, I know, the frustrations people have about gas prices. What we've really seen is the housing market, which was a bubble, had greatly overinflated in all regions of the country. And I know I probably don't get a lot of sympathy about that here because I can only imagine what rents and mortgages you guys are paying.

It is a real drag in all sorts of ways. People, first of all, they feel poorer even if they still have a home or they've already purchased a home, because for a lot of folks, their mortgage is now what's called underwater. The mortgage is more than the home is worth. And so if you feel like your most important asset is now worth less than your debt, that's going to constrain how you spend. People who want to move have a great deal of trouble selling, and people who want to buy, as you pointed out, are seeing terms a lot more restrictive.

So we've put in place a bunch of programs to try to see if we can speed along the process of reaching a new equilibrium. For example, what we did was, we went to the mortgage lender and said, why don't you renegotiate with your mortgage—with the person with the mortgage, renegotiate the terms of their mortgage so that their principal is a little bit lower, they can afford the payments? And that way homes don't get foreclosed on, there are fewer homes on the market, and that will raise prices,

and that will be good for everybody. And we've seen some significant progress on that front.

The challenge we still have, as your questioner properly points out, is that a lot of people who bought a first home when credit was easy now are finding that credit is tough. And we've got to strike a balance. Frankly, there's some folks who are probably better off renting. And what we don't want to do is return to a situation where people are putting no money down and they've got very easy payment terms at the front end. And then it turns out 5 years from now, because they've got an adjustable rate mortgage, that they couldn't afford it, and they lose their home.

I think the regulators are trying to get that balance right. There are certain communities with high foreclosure rates where what we're trying to do is see if can we help State and local governments take over some of these homes and convert them and provide favorable terms to first-time home buyers. But frankly, I think we've got to understand that the days where it was really easy to buy a house without any money down is probably over. And what we—what I'm really concerned about is making sure that the housing market overall recovers enough that it's not such a huge drag on the economy, because if it isn't, then people will have more confidence, they'll spend more, more people will get hired, and overall, the economy will improve.

But I recognize for a lot of folks who want to be first-time home buyers, it's still tough out there. It's getting better in certain areas, but in some places, particularly where there was a big housing bubble, it's not.

National Economy

Mr. Zuckerberg. So I think the next question is from a Facebook employee in the room today. So Lauren Hale has a question. Lauren, where are you from?

Q. Hi. Over here.

The President. Hey, Lauren.

Q. Hi, Mr. President. Thank you so much for joining us today. I am originally from Detroit, Michigan, and now I'm out here working at Facebook. So my question for you kind of builds on some of the things you were just talking about. At the beginning of your term, you spent a lot of time talking about job creation and the road to economic recovery, and one of the ways to do that would be substantially increasing Federal investments in various areas as a way to fill the void left from consumer spending. Since then, we've seen the conversation shift from that of job creation and economic recovery to that of spending cuts and the deficit. So I would love to know your thoughts on how you're going to balance these two going forward or even potentially shift the conversation back.

The President. Well, you're exactly right that when I first came into office, our number-one job was preventing us from getting into another Great Depression. And that was what the Recovery Act was all about. So we helped States make sure that they could minimize some of the layoffs and some of the difficult budget choices that they faced. We made sure that we had infrastructure spending all around the country. And in fact, we made the biggest investment in infrastructure since Dwight Eisenhower built the Interstate Highway System.

We made the largest investment in history in clean energy research, and it's really paying off. For example, when I came into office, we had about 2 percent of the advanced battery manufacturing here in America. And as everybody here knows, what's really holding us back from my goal of a million electric vehicles on the road is that battery technology is still tough. It's clunky, it's heavy, it's expensive, and if we can make significant improvements in battery technology, then I think the opportunities for electric vehicles, alternative vehicles that are much cheaper, our opportunities are limitless.

So those were all investments that we made in the first 2 years. Now, the economy is now growing. It's not growing quite as fast as we would like, because after a financial crisis, typically there's a bigger drag on the economy for a longer period of time. But it is growing. And over the last year and a half, we've seen almost 2 million jobs created in the private sector.

Because this recession came at a time when we were already deeply in debt and it made the debt worse, if we don't have a serious plan to tackle the debt and the deficit, that could actually end up being a bigger drag on the economy than anything else. If the markets start feeling that we're not serious about the problem, and if you start seeing investors feel uncertain about the future, then they could pull back right at the time when the economy is taking off.

So you're right that it's tricky. Any—folks around here are used to the hills in San Francisco, and you've driven—I don't know if they still have clutch cars around here. Anybody ever driven a clutch car? [*Laughter*] I mean, you got to sort of tap and—well, that's sort of what we faced in terms of the economy, right? We got to hit the accelerator, but we've got to also make sure that we don't gun it; we can't let the car slip backwards. And so what we're trying to do, then, is put together a debt and deficit plan that doesn't slash spending so drastically that we can't still make investments in education, that we can't still make investments in infrastructure, all of which would help the economy grow.

In December, we passed a targeted tax cut for business investment, as well as the payroll tax that has a stimulus effect that helps to grow the economy. We can do those things and still grow the economy while having a plan in place to reduce the deficit, first by 2015 and then over the long term. So I think we can do both, but it does require the balanced approach that I was talking about.

If all we're doing is spending cuts and we're not discriminating about it, if we're using a machete instead of a scalpel and we're cutting out things that create jobs, then the deficit could actually get worse because we could slip back into another recession.

And obviously, for folks in Detroit, where you're from, they know that our investments can make a difference because we essentially saved the U.S. auto industry. We now have three auto companies here in America that are all turning a profit. GM just announced that it's hiring back all of the workers that it was planning to lay off. And we did so, by the way, at the same time as we were able to increase fuel efficiency standards on cars for the first time in 30 years. So it can be done, but it takes a balanced approach.

"Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act"/Immigration Reform

Mr. Zuckerberg. All right, so we have a question from the University of Florida, where—in February, you launched this initiative at whitehouse.gov/youngeramericans with this goal to have a hundred youth roundtables across the country, and a bunch of them are taking place right now, watching this Facebook Live.

So Cesar Fernandez and Elesa Rectanus are participating in one of those roundtables, and they wanted to ask you this: "Mr. President, in your deficit reduction speech last week, you spoke of the need to not only reduce Government spending, but to also increase Federal revenue. In light of our Nation's budget challenges, will your administration consider revisiting policies such as the 'DREAM Act,' which the Congressional Budget Office estimates will reduce the deficit by $1.4 billion and increase the Government revenue by $2.3 billion over the next 10 years?"

The President. Let me talk about not only the "DREAM Act," but about immigration policy generally. And I want to thank—Sheryl Sandberg actually participated in a discussion that we had yesterday, bringing together business leaders and government officials and faith leaders, a broad cross-section of Americans together to talk about how do we finally fix an immigration system that's fundamentally broken.

For those of you who aren't familiar, the "DREAM Act" is—deals with a particular portion of the population, kids who were brought here when they were young by their parents. Their parents might have come here illegally. The kids didn't do anything; they were just doing what kids do, which is follow their parents. They've grown up as Americans. They went to school with us or with our kids. They think of themselves as Americans, but many of them still don't have a legal status.

And so what we've said is, especially for these young people, who are our neighbors, our friends, our children's friends, if they are of good character and going to school or joining our military, they want to be part of the American family, why wouldn't we want to embrace them? Why wouldn't we want to make sure that they're contributing to our future?

So that's the "DREAM Act." But that's just a small part of a broader challenge that we have. Immigration in this country has always been complicated. The truth of the matter is that we are both a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws. Sometimes the laws haven't been fair. Sometimes the laws have been restricted to certain ethnic groups. There have been quotas. Sometimes our immigration policies have been arbitrary and have been determined by whether industry at a particular time was willing to bring in workers on the cheap.

But what's undeniable is America is a nation of immigrants. That's our history, and that's what makes us stronger. Because we've got ambitious people from all around the world who come here because they've got a new idea and they want to create the next big thing or they just want a better future for their kids and their family, and that dynamism is part of what's propelled our progress and kept us young.

Now, I think most Americans understand that and most Americans agree with that. At the same time, I think most Americans feel there should be an orderly process to do it. People shouldn't just be coming here and cutting in front of the line, essentially, and staying without having gone through the proper channels.

So what we've said is let's fix the whole system. First of all, let's make the legal immigration system more fair than it is and more efficient than it is. And that includes, by the way, something, I know, that is of great concern here in Silicon Valley. If we've got smart people who want to come here and start businesses and are Ph.D.'s in math and science and computer science, why don't we want them to say? I mean, why would we want to send them someplace else?

So those are potential job creators. Those are job generators. I think about somebody like an Andy Grove of Intel. We want more Andy Groves here in the United States. We don't want them starting companies—we don't want them starting Intel in China or starting it in France. We want them starting it here.

So there's a lot that we can do for making sure that high-skilled immigrants who come here, study—we've paid for their college degrees, we've given them scholarships, we've given them this training; let's make sure that if they want to reinvest and make their future here in America that they can. So that's point number one.

But point number two is you also have a lot of unskilled workers who are now here who are living in the shadows. They're contributing to our economy in all sorts of ways. They're working in the agricultural sector. They are in restaurants, and they're in communities all across the country looking after children and helping to build America. But they're scared, and they feel as if they're locked out of their surroundings.

And what I've said is, they did break the law, they came here, they have to take responsibility for that. They should pay a fine. They should learn English. They should go to the back of the line so that they don't automatically get citizenship. But there should be a pathway for them to get legalized in our society so they don't fear for themselves or their families, so that families aren't separated.

At the same time, let's make sure we've got a secure border so that folks aren't wandering through the desert to get here. Let's make the legal immigration system more efficient and more effective so there aren't huge backlogs.

This is all part of what we call comprehensive immigration reform. And there's no reason why we shouldn't be able to achieve a system that is fair, is equitable, is an economic engine for America that helps the people who are already here get acculturated and makes sure that our laws aren't being broken, but we're still true to our traditions.

But, as I mentioned to Sheryl yesterday, I can't solve this problem by myself. Nancy Pelosi is a big champion of this. The Democratic Caucus in the House, I think, is prepared for—a majority of them are prepared to advance com-

prehensive immigration reform. But we're going to have to have bipartisan support in order to make it happen. And all of you have to make sure your voices are heard, saying this is a priority, this is something important. Because if politicians don't hear from you, then it probably won't happen. I can't do it by myself. We're going to have to change the laws in Congress, but I'm confident we can make it happen.

2012 Federal Budget

Mr. Zuckerberg. All right. So the next one is from a Facebook employee, Leo Abraham. Leo, where are you from?

The President. Hey, Leo.

Q. Hi. Hey.

The President. Hey.

Q. I'm from—originally from San Jose, California. My question is: The 2012 budget plan proposed by Paul Ryan has been praised by many in the media as bold or brave. Do you see this as a time that calls for boldness, and do you think that your—the plan you outlined last week demonstrated sufficient boldness, or is this just a media creation?

The President. No, it's a great question. Look, here's what I'd say. The Republican budget that was put forward I would say is fairly radical. I wouldn't call it particularly courageous. I do think Mr. Ryan is sincere. I think he's a patriot. I think he wants to solve a real problem, which is our long-term deficit. But I think that what he and the other Republicans in the House of Representatives also want to do is change our social compact in a pretty fundamental way.

Their basic view is that no matter how successful I am, no matter how much I've taken from this country—I wasn't born wealthy; I was raised by a single mom and my grandparents. I went to college on scholarships. There was a time when my mom was trying to get her Ph.D., where for a short time she had to take food stamps. My grandparents relied on Medicare and Social Security to help supplement their income when they got old.

So their notion is, despite the fact that I've benefited from all these investments—my grandfather benefited from the GI bill after he fought in World War II—that somehow I now have no obligation to people who are less fortunate than me and I have no real obligation to future generations to make investments so that they have a better future.

So what his budget proposal does is not only hold income tax flat, he actually wants to further reduce taxes for the wealthy, further reduce taxes for corporations, not pay for those, and in order to make his numbers work, cut 70 percent out of our clean energy budget, cut 25 percent out of our education budget, cut transportation budgets by a third. I guess you could call that bold. I would call it shortsighted.

On—[*applause*]—and then, as I said, there's a fundamental difference between how the Republicans and I think about Medicare and Medicaid and our health care system. Their basic theory is that if we just turn Medicare into a voucher program and turn Medicaid into block grant programs, then now you, a Medicare recipient, will go out and you'll shop for the best insurance that you've got—that you can find—and that you're going to control costs because you're going to say to the insurance company, this is all I can afford.

That will control costs, except if you get sick and the policy that you bought doesn't cover what you've got. Then either you're going to mortgage your house or you're going to go to the emergency room, in which case I, who do have insurance, are going to have to pay for it indirectly because the hospital is going to have uncompensated care.

So they don't really want to make the health care system more efficient and cheaper. What they want to do is to push the costs of health care inflation on to you. And then you'll be on your own trying to figure out in the marketplace how to make health care cheaper.

The problem is, you're just one person. Now, you work at Facebook. It's a big enough company; Facebook can probably negotiate with insurance companies and providers to get you a pretty good deal. But if you're a startup company, if you're an entrepreneur out there in the back of your garage, good luck trying to get insurance on your own. You can't do it. If you're

somebody who's older and has a preexisting condition, insurance companies won't take you.

So what we've said is, let's make sure instead of just pushing the costs off on to people who individually are not going to have any negotiating power or ability to change how providers operate or how hospitals or doctors operate, how insurance companies operate, let's make sure that we have a system, both for Medicare, but also for people who currently don't have health insurance, where they can be part of a big pool. They can negotiate for changes in how the health care system works so that it's more efficient, so that it's more effective, so that you get better care—so that we have fewer infection rates, for example, in hospitals—so there are fewer readmission rates, so that we're caring for the chronically ill more effectively, so that there are fewer unnecessary tests. That's how you save money. The Government will save money, but you'll also save money.

So we think that's a better way of doing it. Now, what they'll say is, well, you know what, that will never work because it's Government imposed and it's bureaucracy and it's Government takeover and there are death panels. I still don't entirely understand the whole "death panel" concept. But I guess what they're saying is somehow some remote bureaucrat will be deciding your health care for you. All we're saying is, if we've got health care experts—doctors and nurses and consumers—who are helping to design how Medicare works more intelligently, then we don't have to radically change Medicare.

So yes, I think it's fair to say that their vision is radical. No, I don't think it's particularly courageous. Because the last point I'll make is this: Nothing is easier than solving a problem on the backs of people who are poor or people who are powerless or don't have lobbyists or don't have clout. I don't think that's particularly courageous.

Education Reform

Mr. Zuckerberg. All right, the next one's from the web. We've got a question from Kwame Simmons from Orlando, Florida. And he asks: "I strongly believe that education is the greatest equalizer. With so many problems plaguing our current system, is it possible to examine a complete overhaul of the system so that it addresses the needs of modern students?"

And before you jump in, I just want to say, as someone who has spent a bunch of time researching education and who cares about this, I think that the Race to the Top stuff that you guys have done is one of the most underappreciated and most important things that your administration has done.

The President. I appreciate that. The—[*applause*]—this is an area where actually, I think, you've seen the parties actually come together. And there's some good bipartisan work being done.

It used to be that the argument around education always revolved around the left saying we just need more money and the right saying we should just blow up the system because public schools aren't doing a good job. And what we are now seeing is people recognizing we need both money and reform. It's not an either-or proposition, it's a both-and proposition.

So what Mark just mentioned, something called Race to the Top, pretty simple concept. Most Federal dollars are allocated through a formula. If you've got a certain number of poor kids or you've got a certain number of disabled kids in your school district, there's a formula, and you get a certain amount of money. And every State and every school district gets that money according to the formula.

What we did was, we took about 1 percent of the total spending on education and we said, to get this 1 percent, show us that you're reforming the system. It's almost—it's like a competition model. And so every State, every school district could apply. And you had to show us that you had a good plan to retrain teachers and recruit and do good professional development so we've got the best teachers possible.

You had to have accountability. You had to show us that you were actually making progress in the schools and that you were measuring through data the improvements that were being made, that you were reaching into the

schools that were hardest to reach, because there are about 2,000 schools around the country that account for the majority of dropouts in our country. They're like dropout factories. So show us a plan to go into those schools and really make a big difference.

And what's happened is that over 40 States, in the process of competing for this extra money, ended up initiating probably the most meaningful reforms that we've seen in a generation. And so it's made a huge difference. Even those States that didn't end up actually winning the competition still made changes that are improving the potential for good outcomes in the schools.

So that's the kind of creative approach that you've seen some Democrats and some Republicans embrace. And our hope is we can build on that.

A couple of things that we know work: The most important thing to a good education is making sure we've got a good teacher in front of that classroom. And so providing more support for teachers, recruiting the best and brightest into teaching, making sure that they're compensated, but also making sure that they're performing, that's hugely important.

The other thing is good data so that there's a constant feedback, not just a bunch of standardized tests that go into a drawer or that people may game in order not to get penalized. That's what happened under No Child Left Behind. But instead, real good data that you can present to the teacher while they're still teaching that child and say, you know what, this child is falling behind in math; here are some ways to do it, to improve their performance.

So we're starting to see real progress on the ground, and I'm optimistic that we can actually, before the 2012 election, potentially have a Federal education law that will embody some of the best information that we have about how to initiate good school reform.

Now, last point I'll make on this: Government alone can't do it. One of the things every time I come to Silicon Valley that I'm inspired by, but I'm also frustrated by, is how many smart people are here—but also frustrated that I always hear stories about how we can't find enough engineers, we can't find enough computer programmers. You know what, that means our education system is not working the way it should, and that's got to start early.

And that's why we're emphasizing math and science. That's why we're emphasizing teaching girls math and science. That's why we're emphasizing making sure that Black and Hispanic kids are getting math and science.

We've got to do such a better job when it comes to STEM education. And that's one of the reasons, by the way, that we had our first science fair at the White House in a very long time, just because we want to start making science cool. I want everybody to feel the same way that they did—[*applause*]—I want people to feel the same way about the next big energy breakthrough or the next big Internet breakthrough—I want people to feel the same way they felt about the Moon launch, that that's how we're going to stay competitive for the future. And that's why these investments in education are so important.

But, as I said, Government alone can't do it. There's got to be a shift in American culture, where once again we buckle down and we say, this stuff's important. And it's—that's why, Mark, the work you're doing in Newark, for example, the work that folks like the Gates Foundation are doing in philanthropic investments in best practices in education, especially around math and science training, are going to be so important.

We've got to lift our game up when it comes to technology and math and science. That's, hopefully, one of the most important legacies that I can have as President of the United States.

Health Care Reform

Mr. Zuckerberg. All right. So the next one is from another Facebook employee. Here's James Mitchell. So, James Mitchell, where are you from?

The President. Here's James back here.

Q. Hi, Mr. President.

The President. Hey, James.

Q. I'm James Mitchell. I'm born in Chicago and raised out here in Cupertino, California. I

have yet another question for you about the debt and health care.

The President. Go ahead.

Q. So the biggest threat we have fiscally is the rise in health care costs. Unfortunately, a lot of the solutions we hear to Medicare and Medicaid don't involve actually slowing down the rise in health care costs. Instead, they involve shifting costs to beneficiaries and States. So my question is: Can you talk a bit more about what provisions of the affordable health care act are designed to slow down the rise of health care costs and what policies you'd like to see enacted in the future to continue to slow down the rise of health care costs?

The President. Let me give you a couple of examples, because you're exactly right in how you describe it. I don't want to just shift the health care costs on to the American people, I want to actually reduce health care costs.

Let's take the example of health IT. We're in Silicon Valley, so we can talk about IT stuff. I'll try to sound like I know what I'm talking about. [*Laughter*] The health care system is one of the few aspects of our society where a lot of stuff is still done on paper. The last time you guys went to a doctor's office or maybe to your dentist's office, how many people still had, like, to fill out a form on a clipboard? Right? And the reason for that is because a large chunk of our provider system is not automated.

So what ends up happening is, you may go to your primary care physician, he does some basic tests, he sees something of concern, he refers you to a specialist. You go to the specialist; he'll do another test. You're getting charged, or your insurance company is getting charged, for both those tests, as opposed to the test that was taken by your primary care physician being emailed to the specialist. Or better yet, if it turns out that there may be three or four specialists involved, because it's a difficult diagnosis—this is all hypothetical; you look very healthy. [*Laughter*] But let's say there were a bunch of specialists. What would be ideal would be if you get all the specialists together with the primary care physician the first time you're seen so that you're not paying for multiple visits as well as multiple tests.

That's not how it works right now. Now, part of it is technology. So what we did in the Affordable Care Act, building on what we did with the Recovery Act, is try to provide incentives to providers to start getting integrated, automated systems. And it's tough because the individual doctor may say to him or herself, I don't want to put the initial capital outlay; that's expensive, even though it may make my system more efficient later on.

So providing some incentives, some help, for the front-end investments for a community hospital or for individual providers so that we can slowly get this system more effective, that's priority number one.

We know it can be done, by the way. Surprisingly enough, the health care system that is—does the best job on this of anybody is actually the Veterans Administration, the VA health care system, because it's a fully integrated system. Everybody is working for the VA—all the doctors, all the hospitals, all the providers—so they've been able to achieve huge cost savings just because everybody is on a single system.

It's also, though, how we reimburse doctors and how we reimburse hospitals. So right now what happens is, when you've taken those two tests, if you're old enough to qualify for Medicare, well, each doctor sends their bill to Medicare, and Medicare pays both bills. And let's say that you end up getting an operation. They'll send the bill for that, and so Medicare pays that. Let's say they didn't do a very good job or you got sick in the hospital and you are readmitted and you have to be treated again and they have to do the operation all over again. Medicare then gets billed for the second operation.

I mean, imagine if that's how it worked at—when you bought a car. So you go, you buy your car. A week later, the car doesn't work. You go back to the dealer, and they charged you to fix the bad job that they did in the first place. Well, that's what Medicare does all the time. So we don't provide incentives for performance. We just provide—we just pay for the number of qualified items that were proce-

dures that were performed or tests that were performed by the provider.

So what we want to do is to start changing how folks are reimbursed. Let's take a hospital. We want to give—this is sort of like Race to the Top, what Mark was talking about in education. We want to be able to say to a hospital, if you do a really good job reducing infection rates in the hospital, which kill tens of thousands of people across America every year and are a huge cause for readmission rates, and we know that hospitals can drastically reduce those reinfection rates just by simple protocols of how employees are washing their hands and how they're moving from room to room and so forth—there are hospitals who have done it—if we can say to a hospital, you'll get a bonus for that, Medicare will reimburse you for instituting these simple procedures, that saves the whole system money.

And that's what we've tried to do in the Affordable Care Act, is to start institutionalizing these new systems. But it takes time because we've got a private sector system—it's not like the VA—a bunch of individual doctors, individual hospitals spread out all across the country with private insurers. So it's not something that we can do overnight.

Our hope is, is that over the next 5 years, we're able to see significant savings through these mechanisms, and that will save everybody—not just people who are on Medicare and Medicaid—it will save everybody money, including folks here at Facebook. Because I'm sure that you guys provide health insurance, and I suspect if you look at your health insurance bills, they don't make you happy. Okay.

President's Accomplishments

Mr. Zuckerberg. So we have time for only one more question.

The President. All right.

Mr. Zuckerberg. It's a question from Terry Atwater from Houston, Texas: "If you had to do anything differently during your first 4 years, what would it be?"

The President. Well, it's only been 2½, so I'm sure I'll make more mistakes in the next year and a half.

Mr. Zuckerberg. [*Inaudible*]—questions.

The President. The jury will still be out. [*Laughter*] The—there are all sorts of day-to-day issues where I say to myself, oh, I didn't say that right or I didn't explain this clearly enough or maybe if I had sequenced this plan first as opposed to that one, maybe it would have gotten done quicker.

Health care obviously was a huge battle, and if it hadn't been for Nancy Pelosi and her leadership in the House and the great work that—[*applause*]—Anna Eshoo and Mike Honda and others did—we wouldn't have gotten it done if it hadn't been for great work in Congress.

But I do think that it was so complicated that at a certain point, people just started saying, oh, this is typical Washington bickering. And I've asked myself sometimes, is there a way that we could have gotten it done more quickly and in a way that the American people wouldn't have been so frustrated by it? I'm not sure I could have, because there's a reason why it hadn't gotten done in a hundred years. It is a—it's hard to fix a system as big as health care and as complicated as our health care system.

I can tell you that I think the best way to answer the question is, what do I feel I still have to get done, where I still feel a huge sense of urgency? I've talked about a couple of things. Getting our deficits and debt under control in a balanced way I feel needs to happen while I'm President. I don't want to leave it to the next President.

Immigration—something I mentioned—we have not gotten done. It's something I care deeply about. It's the right thing for the country. I want to get that done while I'm President.

Energy—we haven't talked a lot about energy today, but first of all, 4-dollar-a-gallon gas really hurts a lot of people around this country. It's not because they're wasteful, but if you're driving 50 miles to work and that's the only job you can find, and you can't afford some hybrid so you're stuck with the old beater that you're driving around that gets 8 miles a gallon, these gas prices are killing you right now.

And so this is the reason why I've said that it is so important for us to invest in new approaches to energy. We've got to have a

long-term plan. It means investing in things like solar and wind, investing in biofuels, investing in clean car technology. It means converting the Federal fleet a hundred percent to fuel-efficient vehicles, because we're a huge market maker. Obviously, it turns out that I've got a lot of cars as President. [*Laughter*] And if we're out there purchasing electric cars and hybrids, that can help boost demand and drive down prices. Continuing to increase fuel efficiency standards on cars, increasing oil production, but in an intelligent way. I mean, those are all hugely important. And by the way, we can pay for it.

Let me say this. We lose—the Treasury loses $4 billion a year on subsidies to oil companies. Now, think about this. The top five oil companies have made somewhere between 75 billion and 125 billion every year for the last 5 years. Nobody is doing better than Exxon. Nobody is doing better than Shell or these other companies. They are doing great. They are making money hand over fist. Well, maybe Facebook is doing a little better, but—[*laughter*]—but you get the idea. They're doing really well. They don't need special tax breaks that cost us $4 billion. So what we've said is, why can't we eliminate the tax breaks for the oil companies who are doing great and invest that in new energy sources that can help us save the planet?

So when it comes to energy, when it comes to immigration, when it comes to getting our deficit under control in a balanced and smart way, when it comes to improving our math and science education, when it comes to reinvesting in our infrastructure, we've just got a lot more work to do.

And I guess my closing comment, Mark, would just be I hope that everybody here—that you don't get frustrated and cynical about our democracy. I mean it is frustrating. Lord knows it's frustrating. I—[*laughter*]—and I know that some of you who might have been involved in the campaign or been energized back in 2008, you're frustrated that, gosh, it didn't get done fast enough, and it seems like everybody is bickering all the time. Just remember that we've been through tougher times before. We've always come out ascendant, we've always come out on top, because we've still got the best universities in the world, we've still got the most productive workers in the world, this is still the most dynamic, entrepreneurial culture in the world.

If we come together, we can solve all these problems. But I can't do it by myself. The only way it happens is if all of you still get involved, still get engaged.

It hasn't been that long since election day, and we've gone through some very, very tough times, and we've still gotten a lot done. We've still been able to get this economy recovering. We've still been able to get health care passed. We've still been able to invest in clean energy. We've still been able to make sure that we overturned "don't ask, don't tell." We still made sure that we got two women on the Supreme Court. We've made progress.

So rather than be discouraged, I hope everybody is willing to double down and work even harder. Regardless of your political affiliation, you've got to be involved, especially the young people here, your generation. If you don't give us a shove, if you don't give the system a push, it's just not going to change. And you're going to be the ones who end up suffering the consequences.

But if you are behind it, if you put the same energy and imagination that you put into Facebook into the political process, I guarantee you there's nothing we can't solve.

All right? Thank you, Mark.

Mr. Zuckerberg. So I just want to thank you again. It's such an honor to have you here.

The President. We had a great time.

Mr. Zuckerberg. And as a small token of our appreciation, in case for some reason you want to dress like me——

[*At this point, Mr. Zuckerberg presented the President with a gift.*]

The President. Nice, nice.

Mr. Zuckerberg. A Facebook hoodie.

The President. Oh, this is a high-fashion statement right here. This is beautiful.

Thank you very much, everybody.

Mr. Zuckerberg. Thank you.

The President. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:58 p.m. at Facebook, Inc., headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Sheryl K. Sandberg, chief operating officer, Facebook, Inc.; Andrew S. Grove, senior adviser, cofounder, and former chief executive officer, Intel Corp.; and Supreme Court Associate Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia M. Sotomayor.

Statement on the First Anniversary of the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill
April 20, 2011

One year ago today, the Deepwater Horizon oil platform exploded, killing 11 men and ultimately releasing an estimated 4.9 million barrels of oil in the Gulf of Mexico. That catastrophic event deeply affected the lives of millions of Americans, from local fishermen to restaurant and hotel owners and small businesses throughout the region. From the beginning, my administration brought every available resource to bear, amassing the largest oil spill response in our Nation's history. At the height of the response, approximately 48,000 men and women worked tirelessly to mitigate the worst impacts of the spill. While we've made significant progress, the job isn't done.

Nearly 2,000 responders are actively working in the Gulf to aid in the ongoing recovery efforts. We continue to hold BP and other responsible parties fully accountable for the damage they've done and the painful losses that they've caused. We're monitoring seafood to ensure its continued safety and implementing aggressive new reforms for offshore oil production in the Gulf so that we can safely and responsibly expand development of our own energy resources. And EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson is leading a task force to coordinate the long-term restoration effort based on input from local scientists, experts, and citizens.

The events that unfolded on April 20, 2010, and the oil spill that followed underscores the critical link between the environment and economic health of the Gulf. My administration is committed to doing whatever is necessary to protect and restore the Gulf Coast. Today we remember the 11 lives lost as a result of this tragic event and thank the thousands of responders who worked to mitigate this disaster. But we also keep a watchful eye on the continuing and important work required to ensure that the Gulf Coast recovers stronger than before.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in San Francisco, California
April 20, 2011

Thank you. Everybody, sit down. Have a seat.

I know all of you wish that Stevie would just keep on playing. [*Laughter*] I understand that, and I can relate to it. I was mentioning to Marc—and I hate to do this to you, Stevie, because I'm dating you a little bit—but the first album that I ever bought with my own little spending money was "Talking Book." I was 10 years old. I was 10 years old, and I would sit in my room, and I had this old phonograph, and the earphones were, like, really big. You didn't have the little iPod buds. They covered your whole ear. And I would sit in my room and pretend I was Stevie Wonder. [*Laughter*] And unfortunately, my grandparents, who were—I was living with at the time—they had to suffer hearing me sing. I couldn't hear myself sing. I was just hearing Stevie, and I figured I sounded just like him. [*Laughter*] But I'm sure that was not the case.

Anyway, Stevie and Will.i.am have both been huge supporters, huge friends from very early on in this campaign process. And so it's wonderful to have them here. But I want to most of all thank Marc and Lynne and Leia for sharing their homes. This is an incredible setting, but

what makes it special is the fact that I've got a lot of friends in this room.

As Marc indicated, people who are leaders, not just in this community, but nationally and internationally, but so many of you helped get this project started. Some of you are involved in startups. Well, I was a startup just—not so long ago. And when I think about that campaign in 2008, the fact is, so many of you took a chance on me. It was not at all likely that I was going to win. A lot of people couldn't pronounce my name, much less expect that I would end up being in the Oval Office.

But a lot of you put faith in that campaign, primarily because the campaign wasn't about me. What the campaign was about was a particular vision of America, an idea about who we are as a people. It was a notion that for all our differences, for all the shifts that have taken place in this country, for all our sometimes troubled history, despite—no, because of our diversity of race and faith and region, that there was something special when we come together and that we can somehow combine a fierce individualism and a sense of entrepreneurship and risk-taking and self-reliance and responsibility with also a sense of community, a sense of mutual obligation, a sense that our lives are better if we're looking out for one another.

And that spirit was captured in the campaign, and I was sort of a repository for a lot of hopes and expectations that we could get past so many of the divisions and start working together, because we were facing some fundamental challenges in this country that we hadn't seen in a very long time.

Now, as Marc mentioned, I think none of us realized how profound some of the crises that we were going to confront would be. When I started running, and even up until maybe a couple months before the campaign, we didn't realize we faced the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. We didn't realize that we had already lost 4 million jobs by the time I was sworn in and would lose another 4 million probably in the first 3, 4, 6 months of my Presidency.

We didn't understand the degree to which the financial system might melt down and its global consequences. And yet despite the enormous economic challenges we faced, despite the changes that we're seeing internationally, we have made extraordinary progress, not just pulling the economy back from the brink, but also pushing through that vision that we had, making an America that was more competitive, that was more inclusive, an America that was tapping into that entrepreneurial spirit and once again regaining our edge in this 21st-century global economy, and ended up delivering on promises and commitments that we had made to each other that we knew were going to be very hard, but we knew were going to be important for our future.

So not only did we make the biggest investment in education that the Federal Government has ever made, not only did we make the biggest investment in clean energy in our history, not only did we make the biggest investment in infrastructure since Dwight Eisenhower built the Interstate Highway System, not only did we put the most money in basic research in our history, but we passed a health care bill that finally began to deliver on the promise of universal health care, something we'd been trying to do for a hundred years.

We got "don't ask, don't tell" repealed so that anybody who loves this country can serve this country. We got two women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latino woman—the first Latina on the Supreme Court.

On issue after issue, we've made progress. Now, here's the challenge, and then I'm going to shut up because I want to—well, I won't shut up, I want to take some questions from folks. For all the good work that we've done, we're not finished. We've got more work to do.

And I think most of the people here understand that we still have some fundamental choices to make in this country if we're going to deliver the kind of America to our children and our grandchildren that we dreamed about and thought about in 2008.

The economy is still not as strong as it needs to be, and we've still got millions of people all around the country who are out of work, at risk of losing their home, can't pay their bills. And we've got to deliver for them.

There are still too many children out there who are in substandard schools, can't imagine working for one of the companies that are represented here today, don't even know these companies exist, can't imagine a career that was stable and steady and that would allow them to raise a family. So we're going to have to deliver on education reform here and all across the country and make sure that those kids can go to college and get career ready.

We're not finished when it comes to energy. Right now we've got 4-dollar-a-gallon gas, and most of the people under this tent don't have to worry about that. But for the average person who has to drive 50 miles to work and can't afford to buy the Tesla—[*laughter*]—it's hammering them. It's hurting them. So there's a huge economic imperative. There's a national security imperative as well because we see what's happening in the Middle East and we understand that a finite resource that is primarily located in a very unstable part of the world is not good for our long-term future.

And then there's the environmental aspect of it. There are climate change deniers in Congress, and when the economy gets tough, sometimes environmental issues drop from people's radar screens. But I don't think there's any doubt that unless we are able to move forward in a serious way on clean energy that we're putting our children and our grandchildren at risk.

So that's not yet done. And then we've got this big budget debate that we're having, which really is probably the most fundamental example of the choice that we're going to be facing over the next 10, 15, 20 years. And I won't repeat some of the speeches that I've given recently because I suspect some of you have heard them. But let me just be very clear: The deficit is real. Our debt is real. We've got to do something about it. But how we do it is going to make a huge difference in terms of whether we can win the future.

And we've got a very stark choice. You've got a Republican vision right now in Congress that says we are going to slash clean energy funding by 70 percent, education funding by 25 percent, transportation funding by a third; we're going to cut taxes further for the well to do; and we're going to make up the entire deficit not only by cutting programs for things like Head Start, but we're also going to fundamentally change our social compact so that Medicare is no longer something that our seniors can count on.

The alternative vision, the one that I presented, says we can manage this debt and this deficit in a serious way by eliminating spending we don't need, saving $2 trillion making some tough choices, but also raising a trillion dollars' worth of revenue, primarily from folks like us who have benefited incredibly from this society and everything that it offers, that will save us a trillion dollars on interest; and that we can change our health care system so instead of just shifting those costs on to people who aren't in a position to bear those costs, actually making the health care system more efficient, making it work, using things like health IT and managing of chronic care and making sure that our providers are reimbursed in smarter ways to bend the cost curve on health care so that it's sustainable for the next generation.

That's a fundamental choice, a fundamental distinction in terms of how we view the future.

And so I'll just close these opening remarks by saying that I am a congenital optimist when it comes to this country, and I do not accept a vision that says America gets small, where suddenly, we can't build a world-class smart grid or we can't build the best ports and airports or we don't have the best scientific research or our kids can no longer access the best universities unless they're wealthy or we can't afford to look after people who are the most vulnerable in our society or we can't provide a guarantee to our seniors that they're going to be cared for after a lifetime of hard work.

That's the easy path in some ways. I mean, the easiest thing to do is for the rich and the powerful to say, we've got ours and we don't have to worry about the rest. Doesn't require a lot of imagination. The easiest way to cut health care is just stop giving health care to people.

But that's not the America I believe in. That's not the America you believe in. And that's what 2012 is going to be about. We started something in 2008; we haven't finished it yet. And I'm going to need you to help me finish it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at the residence of Marc R. and Lynne Benioff. In his remarks, he referred to musician William J. "Will.i.am" Adams, Jr.; and Leia Benioff, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Benioff. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 21. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in San Francisco
April 20, 2011

The President. Everybody, have a seat. Thank you so much. It's good to be back in San Francisco.

Part of the reason is because I've got some great friends here. And a couple people I want to acknowledge: Somebody who is one of the greatest Speakers that I know of and is going to be one of the greatest Speakers again, Nancy Pelosi is in the house. The Lieutenant Governor, former mayor, Gavin Newsom is here. An outstanding congressional delegation, Barbara Lee, Mike Honda—where's Mike Honda? John Garamendi is here. Jerry McNerney is here. State Controller John Chiang is here, and State Treasurer Bill Lockyer is here.

And you're here. [*Applause*] I see you. Thank you.

It is nice to be back west, in the great State of California. And let me just say this. Obviously, there are extraordinary responsibilities to this job. There are certain pleasures as well. And coming in on Marine One and then just coming right past the Golden Gate Bridge, that's a pretty nice perk. I've got to say, one of the greatest views in the world.

I had come in from a town hall meeting hosted by Facebook. And I was happy to find out that my Facebook page was doing pretty well. We had—[*laughter*]—I've got 19 million friends, which only puts me half a million friends behind SpongeBob SquarePants. [*Laughter*] So that's something to aspire to, keeping up with SpongeBob.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back. I do.

It's especially nice to be out of Washington, DC. There are wonderful folks doing great work in Washington, but I have to say that the conversation you hear in Washington is just different from the conversation you hear around kitchen tables or around office coolers. And that's why we decided that our reelection campaign will be the first one in modern history to be based outside of Washington, DC. We're going back to Chicago.

We're going back to Chicago because I don't want our campaign only hearing from pundits and power brokers and the cable chatter. I want our campaign to be hearing from the people who got us here. I want to make sure we're putting the campaign back in your hands, the hands of the same organizers and volunteers that proved the last time that together, ordinary people can do extraordinary things. When we're together, there is nothing we can't do, including elect a guy named Barack Obama to the highest office in the land.

Now, a few things have changed since the last time around. I'm older. [*Laughter*] I am grayer. [*Laughter*] But my memory has not gone, and so I can still remember that night in Grant Park, when there was so much excitement in the streets and that sense of hope and possibility. And I know you remember not only the good feeling, but also what I said on that night. I said that our work wasn't ending, it was just beginning. I said that our climb was going to be steep. We had so many challenges ahead of us. And I have to say that at the time, I cautioned people. I said, we may not get there in 1 year; we may not even get there in one term. But if we came together, if we showed the same fortitude and persistence and optimism that had gotten us to election night, then we

could bring about the change that we had talked about, the change that we had envisioned for our communities, for our kids, for our grandkids; the commitments that we had made to each other.

Because that's what the campaign was about. It was a sense of mutual commitment. The campaign wasn't about me, it was about what all of us imagined our country could be. And it turns out that the climb was even steeper than some of us had anticipated. We took office in the middle of the worst recession in our lifetimes, one that left millions of Americans without jobs, hundreds of thousands of people without homes, folks who kept their jobs or kept their homes struggling to pay the bills. It was a recession that was so bad that many families are still grappling with the aftershocks even to this day.

And we had to make tough decisions right off the bat. We had to immediately move a recovery act through that would ensure that we didn't dip into a depression, that would help States and local governments keep teachers on the job and firefighters on the job and police officers on the job, that would make sure that we cut taxes for Americans so they had a little more money in their pockets to help get through tough times.

Some of the decisions we made were not popular. You remember folks talking about the auto bailout. A lot of folks were skeptical; we should just let the auto industry in America go by the wayside. But 2½ years later, our economy is growing again. We're creating jobs again. Over the last 4 months, we've seen the largest drop in unemployment since 1984. Over the last 13 months, we've added nearly 2 million private sector jobs.

And along the way, we did a few other things: the largest investment in clean energy in our history, the largest investment in science and basic research that we had seen in years, the largest investment in our infrastructure since Dwight Eisenhower built the Interstate Highway System.

We passed a law that had eluded folks for a hundred years, finally making sure that every single American in this country won't go bankrupt because they get sick, will be able to get health care coverage even if they've got a preexisting condition. We moved that forward.

We changed our student loan program so that billions of dollars that were going to big banks are now going directly to students, and millions more young people are able to go to college as a consequence.

We put two wise women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina Supreme Court justice.

And we rolled back "don't ask, don't tell," so that everybody can serve their country regardless of who they love.

And then we dealt with pirates—[*laughter*]—and a pandemic—you forgot about that—an oil spill. We've been pretty busy. And yet our work is not finished. It is going——

Audience member. Gay marriage.

The President. ——our work is not finished. It is going to take more than a couple of years. It is going to take more than one term for us to finish everything that we need to do. And I am reminded, almost every night, when I read letters from people from all across the country talk about what it's like to send out 16 résumés and not get a response back. A child writing, saying their parents are about to lose their home: Mr. President, is there something you can do to help? It's heartbreaking. There's so much resilience and so much strength out there, and yet still so much that needs to be done.

And so when I think about running for reelection, I don't look backwards. I look forward. I say to myself, what can we do for those Americans out there? That's what I think about when I wake up every morning. That's what I think about when I go to bed at night. And that's what this campaign has to be about: about your jobs, about your families, about your hopes, about your dreams. That's what we're fighting for.

Because of you, we've been able to make great progress over these last few years. But that progress can't make us complacent; it can't make us content. It should remind us that change, yes, is possible, but we've got to finish

what we started. We've got to finish what we started.

Because of you, yes, we were able to prevent another depression. But in the next few years, we've got to make sure that the new jobs and industries of our time are created right here in the United States of America. We've got to be prepared to win the future. We've got to be prepared to win the future. And that means making sure we're investing in innovation, education, infrastructure—all those ingredients that can keep our economy dynamic.

Because of you, we've made college more affordable for millions of students. But we're not done, we're not done. We've raised standards for teaching and learning in schools all across the country by launching a competition called Race to the Top. But now we've got to keep that reform going until every child is ready to graduate, every child is ready for college, every child can actually afford to go to college, every child is ready for a career. That's how we'll outeducate and outcompete the rest of the world for the jobs of the future, right here in the United States of America.

Yes, because of you, we've made the largest investments in clean and renewable energy in our history. And those are already creating jobs and new businesses. But high prices—high gas prices are killing folks out there.

Audience member. Killing us!

The President. Killing you. You know, it's rough.

Audience member. It's really rough!

The President. You say, "Just really rough." [*Laughter*]

I admit, Secret Service doesn't let me pump gas now. [*Laughter*] But I remember what it was like filling up. [*Laughter*] And you think about a family that has to drive 50 miles to work. They don't have a choice, that's where their job is. They may not be able to sell their home and move closer. That's not an option for them, especially in this housing market.

It would be nice if they could buy a hybrid, but they might not have the money, and they're driving that old beater, and it's getting 8 miles a gallon. [*Laughter*] And that's no joke. We gave everybody a tax cut, but a lot of that money gets eaten up by high gas prices.

And so we've got to keep making investments in clean energy. We've got to strive for energy independence in this country. We've got to invest in solar and wind and electric cars, and it's time we stopped giving the oil companies $4 billion in taxpayer subsidies, take that money and put it into clean energy.

That makes no sense. We've got to change it. Instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy, let's invest in tomorrow's energy. It's good for our security, it will grow our economy, and it will leave our children with a safer and cleaner planet.

Because of all of you, we've put hundreds of thousands of people to work rebuilding our infrastructure. But now we've got to make sure that we're built to compete in the 21st century, not just new roads and new bridges, but high-speed rail and high-speed Internet, a smart grid to make sure that we can move all that clean energy all across the country.

I want to make sure that America is the best place on Earth to do business. And part of that is having a world-class infrastructure. I don't want folks flying around the world and saying, how come our airports aren't as nice as they are in Beijing or Singapore? I don't want people going to Europe and saying, boy, these are really nice trains. How come we don't have trains like this?

That's not the American way. I mean, I hate to be parochial, but I want us to have the best stuff. That's part of what it means to be American. We got nice infrastructure.

Audience member. We've got the best President!

The President. Well—[*applause*]. We got to outbuild, we got to outeducate, outinnovate the rest of the world.

Because of you, we finally got health care passed. We said health care should no longer be a privilege in this country. It should be something that's affordable and available for every American. We said, in the United States, you should not go bankrupt when you get sick. But you know, there are folks who want to roll

it back before it even has a chance to get implemented effectively.

Because of you, we passed Wall Street reform that helps make sure that we don't go through the same kind of crisis that we went through before and you as consumers aren't taken advantage of when it comes to mortgages or credit cards. But you know, there are some folks who want to roll it back.

Because of you, we passed a law that says a woman should get an equal day's pay for an equal day's work. What do you think, Nancy Pelosi? Do you agree with that?

But you all know that there's a lot more that can be done when it comes to enforcement of those laws. Yes, we overturned "don't ask, don't tell," but we still have more work to do to make sure that this country is fully equal and treats everybody with dignity and respect. We've got more work to do. We removed 100,000 troops from Iraq and ended combat missions there like I promised we would. But we've still got more work to do to make ourselves secure and bring our troops home.

We've got to protect the changes that we made, and we've got to make the changes that remain undone. We've got to keep moving forward. We've got to keep working for the America that we believe in, the America we want to leave behind to our kids. And that's what the debate we're having in Washington right now is all about.

There's a lot of talk right now about debt and deficits and budget and spending. What this debate is really about is what kind of future we want, about what kind of country we believe in fundamentally. I believe in an America where Government lives within its means. I want a Government that is lean and effective and not wasting your money, because you don't have any money to waste, which means we've got to cut some spending in Washington. We've got to cut domestic spending. We've also got to cut defense spending. We've got to cut—[*applause*]—and we've got to cut spending in our Tax Code. We've got a whole bunch of loopholes in there that we don't need. We've got to eliminate every dime of waste.

And if we want to take responsibility for the debt that we owe, then we've got to make some tough decisions. There are going to be some things that would be nice to have, but we can afford to do without. We all need to share in the sacrifice to get us on a stable financial footing.

And by the way, if you are progressive, you've got to be just as concerned about that as somebody who considers themselves a fiscal conservative, because the fact of the matter is, if money that could be going to Head Start or money that could be going to programs that are putting people back to work, if that money is being wasted, that's not good. That doesn't promote progressive values. We've got to be just as scrupulous in thinking about how Government spends money as anybody else. We've got to be more so.

But let me tell you something, I will not reduce our deficit by sacrificing the things that have always made America great, the things that have made Americans prosper. I won't sacrifice our investments in education. I will not sacrifice those. I won't sacrifice our investments in science and basic research. I won't sacrifice the safety of our highways or our airports. I won't sacrifice our investment in clean energy at a time when our dependence on foreign oil is causing Americans so much pain at the pump. I will not sacrifice America's future. That I will not do.

If we want to reduce our deficit, yes, we need to cut spending. But we need shared sacrifice. And that means ending the tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans in this country; we can afford it.

It's not because we want to punish success. It's because if we're going to ask everybody to sacrifice a little, we can't just tell millionaires and billionaires they don't have to do a thing. Just relax, that's fine. We'll take care of this. [*Laughter*] Go count your money. That's fine. [*Laughter*]

Because some of you bought my book, I fall in this category. [*Laughter*] I'm speaking about myself. I can afford to do a little more, especially when the only way to pay for these tax cuts for the wealthy is to ask seniors to pay thousands of dollars more for health care; or

cut children from Head Start; or doing away with health insurance for millions of people on Medicaid, seniors in nursing homes or poor kids or middle class families who've got an autistic child. That's not a tradeoff I'm willing to make. And that's not a tradeoff most Americans are willing to make, regardless of party. We can do better than that. We are better than that. We are better than that.

The America we know is great, not just because of our skyscrapers or the size of our GDP. It's because we've been able to keep two ideas together at the same time. The first idea is that we are all individuals endowed with certain inalienable rights and liberties, that we are self-reliant, we are entrepreneurs. We don't expect others to do for us what we can do for ourselves, and we don't really like people telling us what to do. [*Laughter*]

But the second idea, just as important, is that we're all in this together, that we look out for one another, that I am my brother's keeper, that I am my sister's keeper, that I want to make sure that a child born in a tough neighborhood has the same opportunities I had. And I do that, I feel that way not out of charity, but because my life is richer, my life is better, when the people around me have some measure of security and some measure of dignity, and they too have a shot at the American Dream.

That's our vision for America. It's not a vision of a small America. It's a vision of a big America, of a compassionate America, a caring America, an ambitious America. And that's what this campaign is about.

There are those right now who say that this is kind of the end of the line. We've got these deficits, we've got debt, we've gone through this recession, there's international competition. China and India and Brazil, they're all growing faster than we are. And you know what, maybe we've just got to shrink. We've got to shrink everything. We can't afford to do big things. We can't afford to make sure every child gets a shot at college. We can't afford to make sure that we've got the best roads and ports and airports. We can't afford to make sure that every senior knows they've got basic health care available to them when they get older. We can't afford to keep our air and water clean. We can't afford to invest in the arts. We can't afford to maintain our national parks.

That's not a vision of America that I want to pass on to Malia and Sasha. I want a vision of America that is big and bold and ambitious as it has ever been. That's what I'm fighting for, and that's what this campaign has to be about. A vision of a big, generous, compassionate America; a vision where we're living within our means but we're still investing in our future; a vision where we all share sacrifice, nobody bears all the burden, and we all share in opportunity; a vision where we live up to the idea that no matter who you are, no matter where you come from, no matter what you look like, no matter whether your ancestors landed here on Ellis Island or came here on slave ships or came across the Rio Grande, we are all connected. We will rise and fall together.

That's the vision of America that I've got. That's the idea at the heart of America. That's the idea at the heart of our campaign.

And that's why I'm going to need your help, now more than ever.

Audience member. I'm in!

The President. This campaign—you're in. I need you all in.

This campaign is still at its early stages, but now is the time when you can shape it. Now is the time when you can get out of the gate strong. I know there are times where some of you have felt frustrated because we haven't gotten everything done as fast as we wanted. We didn't get everything exactly the way we had planned.

Audience member. Health care.

Audience member. Single payer.

The President. See, there? Case in point, right? All right. See, I knew I'd open up this can of worms. [*Laughter*]

Look, there are times where I felt the same way that you do. This is a big, complicated, messy democracy. Change is not simple. Everybody likes change in the abstract, but change in the concrete is hard. It's tough. It requires work.

Not everybody agrees with us. Not everybody agrees in this auditorium about issues. That's part of what makes this country special, is the nature of our democracy. And so sometimes it can be frustrating. And I know there are times where you're sitting there and you're thinking, golly, you know, Obama, he's made some compromise with the Republicans on this or that. Or, how come he's—he should have done it this way. Everybody's a political consultant. [*Laughter*] And if he had just phrased it that way, I'm sure we could have gotten health care done in 2 months. [*Laughter*] You know who I'm talking about—you. That's right.

And then your friends come, and you say, oh, Obama's changed. He's—I was—I used to be so excited. I still have the poster, but—[*laughter*]. I know. I know.

Sometimes I get frustrated. There are times where I am just so burdened by the fact that there are still so many folks out there who we haven't—haven't gotten the help that they need. And so I understand how you guys feel. But we knew this wouldn't be easy. We knew that on a journey like this, there were going to be setbacks, there were going to be detours, there were going to be some times where we stumbled.

People act like the campaign was easy. They weren't on the campaign. [*Laughter*] They all look back: Oh, Obama, he ran such a perfect campaign, it was so smooth. What campaign were you on? [*Laughter*] This was hard. So we knew that there were going to be setbacks and stumbles.

But here's what keeps me going. At every juncture in our history, when our future was on the line, when we were at a crossroads like we are right now, we pulled through, and we pulled through together. We were able to make the changes that were needed. And it was hard. It was full of debate and sometimes rancor and sometimes worse. That's how this country became more equal. That's how the women's movement started. That's how the civil rights movement started. That's how the union movement started.

At every juncture, there's been resistance and debate and uncertainty, but somehow, we pulled through, together. So whenever you hear people say our problems are too big to solve, whenever you hear people say we've got to shrink back on our dreams, whenever you hear people say we can't bring about the changes that we seek, whenever you hear people say, well, the campaign was this or that, but now governing is somehow different, I just want you to think about all the progress that we've already made.

I want you to think about all the unfinished business we've got ahead of us. I want you to be excited about the future that lies before us. I want to remind you and everybody else of those three simple words that summed up what we believe as a people: Yes, we can.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:52 p.m. in the Nob Hill Masonic Center. In his remarks, he referred to Supreme Court Associate Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia M. Sotomayor. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 21.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in San Francisco
April 21, 2011

The President. Everybody, please be seated. Thank you. It is wonderful to be here, and I'll admit I sort of slept in. [*Laughter*] That whole 3-hour time difference is okay. I did stay up late last night, so I had an excuse.

We've got just some great friends in the audience, people who have helped us in so many ways and helped California is so many ways. I just want to acknowledge a few folks to make sure, if they haven't been already acknowledged. Somebody who I had the pleasure of serving with and is one of the finest Senators in the country, Dianne Feinstein is here. Your dynamic Lieutenant Governor, Gavin Newsom is

in the house. One of my favorites, somebody who was with me through thick and thin during the course of my campaign, and then, hopefully, she felt I was there with her during the course of her campaign, Attorney General Kamala Harris is here.

San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee is in the house, doing a great job. Former Mayor Willie Brown is here. No matter how hard I try, Willie is still better dressed than me. [*Laughter*] Although I'm still getting used to the no mustache thing. I mean, he's a pretty good-looking guy, but I still remember that.

And what can I say about Nancy Pelosi? She has been—I think will go down in history as one of the finest Speakers that we have ever had, and she is going to continue to be in the future one of the great Speakers that we've ever had.

So many of you were with us in 2008, and I had great fun last night talking to a big crowd, and you could start feeling people getting back—Jerry already left, I thought. Jerry was here. [*Laughter*] Your Governor, Jerry Brown, was in the house. [*Laughter*] But it's always awkward when you introduce someone and they're not there. [*Laughter*] So Jerry had to leave, but—because he had important business to do on behalf of the State of California.

Last night was a wonderful event, and I had a chance to talk to a lot of our grassroots supporters here in California. And I reminded them that the campaign we ran in 2008 wasn't about me. It was about a commitment that the American people were making to each other. It was about a vision of what America could be, because what we understood was that we were at a crossroads.

There are moments in history that are inflection points, and I think we understood back in 2008 that we were entering into one of those periods. Domestically, we had gone through a decade in which the economy was growing, but it was growing on top of a bubble. And people at the very top were doing very well, but the wages and incomes of ordinary families had flatlined, and we were starting as a Government to live beyond our means, with tax cuts and two wars that weren't paid for. And so I think people understood even before the recession hit that somehow, the way our economy was operating was not conducive to long-term sustained economic growth or making sure that everybody had a chance at the American Dream.

Internationally, we were seeing changes around the world: countries like China and India rising, areas like the Middle East becoming less stable, the world shrinking because of technology, much of it invented right here in this region. And so I think we understood that we were going to have to adapt in some fundamental way in order to make sure that our kids and our grandkids ended up inheriting the kind of America that we inherited.

And so as I think about the campaign, what always excited me was not the huge crowds. It wasn't all the attention that I got. What really excited me was whenever we went into a community and it turned out that people who hadn't been involved in politics before were suddenly getting involved. And folks who would normally not meet suddenly were meeting and planning and plotting. And entire virtual communities got set up in places like Idaho and northern Nevada. And these folks would set up their own teams, and they were coming up with ideas about how to get folks more engaged and more involved.

There was a sense that from the bottom up, the American people were saying, we're going to reach for a more hopeful future and we're going to make our politics work. We're going to insist on a politics that is responsive to the hopes and dreams of ordinary folks.

Audience member. Mr. President, we're going to do a song. Can we stand?

The President. Well, let me——

[*At this point, the audience members began to sing.*]

The President. That's very nice. Nancy, did you plan this? [*Laughter*]

All right, how about—that was a pretty good song. You guys sing better than I do.

[*The audience members continued to sing.*]

All right, guys. That was a nice song. You guys have much better voices than I have. Okay, thank you very much, guys.

Audience member. Thank you for listening.

The President. Of course. Well, I appreciate that. Now, where was I? [*Laughter*] It did break my flow, I've got to admit.

Now, there's an example of creativity that we saw during the campaign. [*Laughter*] You know, it wasn't always convenient, but it's part of what made 2008 special. And what's happened—and I think that was indicative of that performance as well—is, is that over the last 2½ years, change turned out to be tougher than a lot of us expected, right? I think a lot of folks didn't recognize that we might end up going through the worst recession since the Great Depression and that we'd see 8 million jobs lost, devastating entire communities all across the country. I think we didn't anticipate a housing crisis that kept on worsening or the potential of a financial meltdown.

And what ordinary folks are going through still, even after the economy has started growing again, is something that keeps me up at night, and it's something that I think about the first thing when I wake up in the morning.

We knew that we had to make changes in energy, and we've made some, but we understood that despite these changes, folks are still out there with four-a-gallon gas, and that's tough on ordinary families. They can't afford to buy a new hybrid car if they're driving 50 miles a day to go to work.

And so what I think a lot of folks feel over the last 2½ years is we've done extraordinary work—in part, thanks to folks like Nancy and Dianne and people in Congress—but we understand that we've still got more work to do.

I could not be prouder of our track record over the last 2½ years. But yanking this country out of a Great Depression, passing historic health care laws so that people who are bankrupt—people who are sick don't have to go through bankruptcy in order to pay their medical bills; making sure that "don't ask, don't tell" was finally repealed; making sure that we've got two women on the Supreme Court, and one of them is the first Latina on the Supreme Court; making sure that we made the largest investment in clean energy and education and infrastructure in our history—I could not be prouder of those achievements. But we've got so much more work to do. And we're not going to be able to make those changes unless that same spirit that drove us in 2008 drives us in 2012.

I think that a lot of folks feel that, well, he's now President; he's a little grayer, he's a little older. It's not quite as new as it was. And so we can run a different kind of campaign: more top down, more Washington.

And I guess part of my message here in California today is that we need you now more than ever. Your engagement, your involvement, your commitments are going to be critically important because the work that we wanted to do, the vision that we had for the country is unfinished, and because we're facing as stark as a choice—as stark of a choice as we've seen, I think, in this country philosophically as we've seen in a very long time. And we're seeing that in the budget discussions that we're having right now.

We've got a serious deficit and debt problem. There is no doubt about it. It's one that we inherited, but it's real. And we've got a responsibility to fix it. The question is, how do we fix it? Are we going to fix it by making sure that we eliminate spending that we don't need, as I've proposed, but also making sure that everybody shares the burden and we're raising additional revenues by making sure that those of us who have done so well in this society can afford to pay a little bit more? Or do we end up balancing our budget and reducing our deficit by fundamentally reworking our social compact so that suddenly kids on Head Start don't have those opportunities anymore, so that we say to our seniors Medicare is no longer a guarantee that you will have health care when you are older—here's a voucher, we're going to shift the costs onto you, and if you can't get the health care that you need on the open market, then tough luck?

Is it a vision of America that is big and ambitious and generous and says we're going to invest in clean energy and we are going to invest

in our kids' college educations, we're going to invest in math and science education because we know that innovation is going to be the key to the 21st century? And we're going to invest in our infrastructure because we want to make this a great country to do businesses and we understand that means moving goods and services and people and information efficiently around the country?

Or do we have a shrunken image of America that says we can't afford to do those things anymore, that America just doesn't do big things anymore? That's the vision that is reflected in the budget that's already been voted on by the House Republicans, one that says we can't afford to do big things anymore. I fundamentally disagree with that vision. That's not what built California. That's not what built Silicon Valley. That's not what made us the greatest country on Earth.

So this debate is going to be fierce. It is going to be serious. But it can't just take place in Washington. It's going to have to be animated by conversations that you have with your friends and your neighbors and your coworkers. And you're going to have to be speaking out and pulling together networks, and it's going to be a conversation that's taking place at the State and local levels just as much as it is as the national level. It already is.

Here's the thing. For all the challenges that we've experienced over the last 2½ years, for all the issues, international and domestic, that we've dealt with, despite the occasional setback and the frustrations, what we've already gotten accomplished in 2½ years gives me confidence about what we can accomplish in the next six.

We have gone through tougher times before, both as a country, but also as a movement. And each time, because we've come together, we've been able to achieve what a lot of folks thought was impossible. People really didn't think we were going to get health care passed, but Nancy helped prove them wrong.

We didn't think—a lot of people didn't think that we were going to get "don't ask, don't tell" repealed until we got it repealed.

A lot of folks didn't think that we could elect a guy named Barack Obama to the Presidency until we got Barack Obama elected to the Presidency. You have proved time and again that when people of good will come together, there's nothing that's impossible.

And so I just ask all of you to make sure that your participation in this process over the next 18 months isn't restricted to writing a check, but rather, continues to embody the same kinds of imagination and can-do spirit and, I think most importantly, that sense of community that was so central to us being successful in 2008.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. And thank you again for the song.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:28 a.m. at the St. Regis Hotel. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting and a Question-and-Answer Session in Reno, Nevada
April 21, 2011

The President. Thank you. Hello, Reno! Thank you. Thank you so much. Please, everybody have a seat.

It is great to be back here in Reno, great to be back in Nevada. I am thrilled that all of you are here. We've got some special, special people that I want to acknowledge. First of all, I want to thank ElectraTherm for hosting us, and John Fox, the CEO of ElectraTherm, is here; Stephen Olson, the president and CFO of ElectraTherm. Thank you very much. They just had a chance to meet me backstage, and they were describing all the great work that they are doing. I am told the contraption behind me here is known as the Green Machine, produces renewable energy from low-temperature heat waste. And John and Stephen were explaining to me how it works, and I was nod-

ding, pretending like I understood what they were saying. [*Laughter*] Actually, I have no idea how it works, but I'm glad it does work. [*Laughter*]

And I want to congratulate ElectraTherm for being a fine example of a clean energy company that's been growing by leaps and bounds over the last few years. Give yourselves a big round of applause.

In addition, we've got some people who are here. Somebody who's working hard for you, Congresswoman Shelley Berkley is here. Mayor Bob Cashell is here. Lieutenant Governor Brian Krolicki is here. State Controller Kim Wallin is in the house. State Treasurer Kate Marshall is here. Secretary of State Ross Miller is here. Catherine Cortez Masto, attorney general, is here. Steven Horsford, senate majority leader, is in the house. And John Oceguera, speaker of the house, is here as well.

Thank you all for your attendance. Last week, I laid out a plan on one of the biggest issues that we're going to be facing this year, and that is how to get America's finances in order, a plan for shared prosperity through shared responsibility. And before I take some of your questions today, I'd like to discuss the plan briefly because it goes to the heart of what's happening at this company and businesses all across America. It's a plan that does two big things: First, it cuts spending and brings down the deficit. It cuts spending and brings down the deficit. And we know how important that is. Just like any family on a tight budget, America has to start living within its means. And for a long time, Washington acted like that rule didn't apply to the Federal Government. A lot of folks promised us a free lunch. We had a surplus in 2000; we had a surplus a decade ago. But we cut taxes, including for millionaires and billionaires, we fought two wars, we created a new prescription drug plan, and we didn't pay for any of it. Didn't pay for any of it, just put it on the credit card.

Well, as the saying goes, it turns out there is no such thing as a free lunch. So we were left with a big deficit when I walked into office and a lot of accumulated debt and interest on that debt.

And then it was made worse by the worst recession that we've had since the Great Depression. And as many of you know, when you have a huge recession like that, two things happen: On the one hand, revenues go down because companies and individuals aren't doing as well, so you're not taking in as many taxes. On the other hand, the demands on Government are even greater, whether it's unemployment benefits or trying to help States and local governments deal with their shortfalls. And so that added to the deficit as well.

Now, the bottom line is this: If we don't close our deficit, if we don't start reducing our debt, if we don't get our finances, medium and long term, under control, if we keep on spending more than we take in, it's going to cause serious damage to our economy. Companies might be less likely to set up shop and hire folks here in Nevada and here in the United States. It could cost us more to take out loans for homes or buying a new car or starting a business. And we won't be able to invest in those critical investments we need to win the future. Those are the kinds of investments that make a company like ElectraTherm possible.

So we have to tackle this challenge. And I believe the right way to tackle it is to live up to another old-fashioned principle, which is shared responsibility. That means everybody has to do their part.

First thing we've got to do is to comb through the budget and find every dime of savings that we can, wherever we can find it. And we've made a good start a few weeks ago, when both parties came together, Republicans and Democrats, around a compromise on spending that reduced it and kept the Government open at the same time. So we need to build on those savings, and I'm not going to quit until we've found every dime that we can. We'll check under the cushions. But we're going to find—any program that's not working, we need to eliminate it. Anything that can be done more efficiently, we want to do it.

But finding savings in our domestic spending by itself won't be enough; it only gets you so far. So we've also got to find savings in places like the defense budget. I have no greater

honor than being the Commander in Chief. And when I watch what our young men and women are doing overseas, it's incredible. So I can promise you, I will not cut a penny if it undermines our national security. But over the last 2 years, the Secretary of Defense has taken on wasteful spending that does little to protect our troops or protect our Nation, like old weapons systems that the Pentagon doesn't want. It says we don't need them, but somehow still gets into the budget thanks to well-connected special interests. Secretary Gates has already found $400 billion worth of waste in the Pentagon budget. I think we can find those same kinds of savings again.

Next, we're going to need to reduce health care spending and strengthen Medicare and Medicaid through some commonsense reforms that build on what we already have done with the health care reform bill—eliminates wasteful subsidies to insurance companies, for example; actually improves care by making it easier for folks to buy generic drugs; helps providers manage care for the chronically ill. And we need to reform the Tax Code so that it's fairer and simpler. I know that's on people's minds. Some of you just had to file. And I know I looked at my bill. And I have actually done my taxes quite a few times. I admit I don't do them now. [*Laughter*] But all of us have gone through the experience of saying this is just too complicated. It doesn't make sense. The amount of taxes you pay shouldn't depend on a high-priced accountant or lawyer that you can hire. It should be fair and simple.

And part of what we have to do with our Tax Code is also end some of the tax cuts that were instituted for the wealthiest Americans. Now, I say that not because I want to punish success. I'm rooting for everybody to get rich. But I believe that we can't ask everybody to sacrifice and then tell the wealthiest among us, well, you can just relax and go count your money and don't worry about it; we're not going to ask anything of you.

I've been incredibly blessed by this country; son of a single mom, went on scholarships to get through school. And so the fact that I'm now well off, I want to be able to give a little bit something back so that the next generation can achieve that same success. I don't need additional tax cuts, especially when I know that extending those tax cuts may end up meaning that some senior citizens are getting less health care; or thousands of kids on Head Start might not have that opportunity available to them; or people who are on Medicaid, seniors who are in nursing homes or families who have got a child who's autistic or disabled, that somehow they're left to fend for themselves. That's not a good option from my perspective. That's not a tradeoff I'm willing to make.

And I don't believe it's a tradeoff that most Americans are willing to make, no matter what party you belong to. That's not who we are as a country. We are better than that. We don't allow people who are vulnerable just to sink further and further without giving them a little bit of a hand up. It's part of what has made this country great.

So that's the first part of our plan. We're going to cut spending in a way that's fair and asks everybody to share responsibility. We're going to reform our Tax Code. But here's what else we need to do: We've got to make sure that even as we're living within our means, even as Government is not spending more than it's taking in, that we're still investing in the future, we're still strengthening the middle class, we're still growing the economy and putting people back to work.

So we're going to make some cuts in some programs, including some that I like, and if we were in better fiscal shape, we'd keep on funding. But I'm telling you what we're not going to do. We're not going to reduce our deficit by gutting our investment in clean energy and medical research and basic science. I refuse to make that choice.

America has always been the world's engine for innovation, the leader in discovery. That's who we are. That's how we've prospered. I don't want other countries to get the lead in the industries of tomorrow, I want America to lead in these industries. I want new technologies invented here. I want companies like ElectraTherm to set up shop here in America and to hire Ameri-

can workers and build American products. That's the future that we deserve.

Let's just take the example of energy. Think about it. Everybody right now is dealing with $4 a gallon at the pump. Now, I admit Secret Service doesn't let me fill up my own tank now. [*Laughter*] But I remember before I was President the last time gas prices went up this high. It's tough.

And if you're somebody who's got to drive 20 miles, 30 miles to a job, and maybe you don't have the money to buy a new car that gets better gas mileage, so you got that old beater. It's 8 miles a gallon, and you know? [*Laughter*] I've been there. [*Laughter*]

It hurts because you know every time you go to work a big chunk of your paycheck is being eaten up. And you might already be having trouble making ends meet at the end of the month. So this gas issue is serious. But here's the problem. Every time it happens, every time gas prices go up like this, like clockwork, suddenly, politicians look around and they discover high gas prices. And they're shocked, and they get in front of TV, and they say, we've got a three-point plan to bring gas down to two bucks a gallon. And then when gas prices go down, nothing ever happens, and we're back into the same old patterns, and we don't have a comprehensive energy strategy for the future.

Now, there are some things that we can do right now. Last month, I asked my Attorney General to look into any cases of price gouging so we can make sure nobody is being taken advantage of at the pump. Today I'm going to go a step further. The Attorney General is putting together a team whose job it is to root out any cases of fraud or manipulation in the oil markets that might affect gas prices, and that includes the role of traders and speculators. We're going to make sure that nobody is taking advantage of American consumers for their own short-term gain.

And while we're at it, if we're looking for places to save money that we can then use to invest in clean energy projects like ElectraTherm, let's start with the $4 billion in taxpayer subsidies that right now are going to big oil companies even though they are making billions of dollars a year as it is because of these high oil prices. Four billion dollars a year are going to companies that are making record profits. Even during the recession they were making big profits.

The big five oil companies over the last 5 years, the least they've made in profits is $75 billion. The most they've made is $125 billion. They are doing fine. And we are encouraging production. We are working to make sure that there are safe and secure ways for us to drill for more oil, develop more natural gas. We are all for production in a safe way. But these folks don't need further incentives by getting a better deal than the mom-and-pop shop down the street are getting when it comes to their taxes. They shouldn't get special tax breaks worth $4 billion that we could invest someplace else. That doesn't make sense. It's got to stop.

Instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy sources, let's invest in tomorrow's. Some in Congress have proposed slashing by 70 percent our investment in clean energy. I'm not going to do that. I was talking to John about the fact that the investment made by the Department of Energy helped ElectraTherm do what it's doing: helped it expand, helped it hire more workers. Why are we going to stop making investments in companies like this?

We're also not going to reduce our deficit by sacrificing investments in infrastructure. You know, America used to have the best roads, the best bridges, the best trains, the best airports, the best ports. That's part of what made us great. That's part of why businesses wanted to locate here; they could move businesses—or they could move products, services, information. We don't have the best infrastructure anymore. Our roads and bridges are deteriorating.

Remember what happened in Minnesota when that bridge just collapsed? There are bridges like that all across the country. Our sewer systems, our water systems are not where they need to be. And that's the old infrastructure. What about the new infrastructure? You go to Beijing airport, it is unbelievable. You go to some of ours, it was built back in the fifties.

We don't have high-speed rail in this country. Why not? Every other advanced country has got it. It works. We can do this.

If we want businesses to locate here in America and create jobs, we've got to make sure that America is built to compete. We've got to have the best roads and the quickest trains and the best broadband networks so we can move information around. We don't want to be dodging potholes for the next 30 years. Let's put some people to work doing the work that America needs done.

And if we're going to reduce our deficit, we're not going to do it by cutting education. We're not going to do it by cutting education. This is another bright idea that some in Congress have. In a world where our kids are going to be facing tougher competition than ever before, where you've got hundreds of millions of Chinese kids and Indian kids and Brazilian kids and Eastern European kids, all who are trying to compete for the jobs of tomorrow, how are we not going to invest in making sure our kids have the best skills possible?

We see why this matters right here. More than 50,000 college students from Nevada are relying on Pell grants to help them pay their tuition. Now, working with folks like Shelley, we were able to eliminate some subsidies that were going to big banks because they were middlemen on student loan programs, and take that money and put more money into Pell grants so that the grants were higher, so that more kids could get them and they'd have less debt when they graduate. That was the right thing to do. Now you've got some folks in Congress who want to roll back some of those changes. How many of those students do you think can afford to pay a thousand dollars more to go to school? I know what it's like. I could not have made it through college without scholarships, without loans.

I'm standing here before you because America gave me opportunity. How am I going to pull up the ladder on the next generation of kids who are just as talented, smarter than I am? All they need is a chance. So I think it would be a mistake to balance the budget on the backs of students by cutting their scholarships by more than a thousand dollars and forcing a whole lot of students to go without them altogether.

So that's the bottom line. We need to cut spending. We can't ignore future deficits. But just as ignoring deficits would mortgage our future, failing to invest in our kids, in our infrastructure, in our basic research and clean energy, that would be mortgaging our future as well. And I'm not willing to do it. And that's at the core of the debate that we're having right now.

Both Democrats and Republicans agree that we need to cut the deficit. In fact, there is general agreement on the need to cut about 4 trillion over the medium term to hit our targets. And when folks in Washington agree on anything, that's quite an accomplishment. [*Laughter*] So the debate isn't about whether to cut the deficit, the debate is about how we cut the deficit. And my view is we can live within our means while still investing in our future. We can take a balanced approach, cutting where we can while investing in education and innovation and infrastructure, strengthening the safety net of Medicare and Medicaid to make sure that they're there for future generations.

And I think that Democrats and Republicans can come together to solve this problem. It has been done before. It won't be easy. There will be some strong disagreements. I'm willing to bet that along the way some politics will be played. [*Laughter*] That's just a guess. And there will be some who say, you know what, the country is just too divided; we're not going to get it done. But I'm optimistic. I'm hopeful. I'm confident that we can come together.

And here's why this is so important. Ultimately, this debate is not just about numbers on a page. It's about the vision we have for our future, who we are as a country. It's about making sure that the most you can do here is not just live out your own American Dream, but make sure that the people around you are living out their American Dream as well.

We want to make sure this is a country where if you're willing to try hard you can make it, where everybody has a chance at prosperity. That's my focus, that's my guiding light.

It's what I think about when I wake up in the morning and go down to the Oval Office. That's what I think about when I leave the Oval Office and go to bed at night. And that's why I'm going to need the help of all of you. I don't want you to be bystanders in this debate. I want you to hold me accountable. I want you to hold Washington accountable. I hope you will hold all of our feets to the fire, because you've got a big stake in this fight. And if your voices are heard, we will meet this challenge. That's how we're going to secure our future. That's how we're going to make our country everything that it can be.

Thank you very much, everybody.

All right, everybody, have a seat. I've got a little time for questions. I'll take off my jacket, because I know I'm in the hot seat here. We've got some folks in the audience with microphones, so if you just raise your hand I will call boy, girl, boy, girl—[*laughter*]—make sure it's fair. And I'll try to get through as many questions as I can.

This gentleman right here. Here, here's a microphone. Introduce yourself, if you don't mind.

Energy/Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources and Technologies

Q. Hi, my name is Howard Crabtree. And I go to the TMCC school right now, just trying to get an education after we lost our—my wife and I lost our jobs here.

So I entered the renewable energies program, and the more and more I learn about energy and the policies and things, I wonder what—is the Federal Government doing anything to encourage the States—because I know the States really control it—are they doing anything to encourage the States to open the market up so that there are more competitors in the market to bring prices down? I know that I've only ever had NV Energy as a choice.

The President. Well, I am not fully familiar with what Nevada's State regulatory structure is, I'll admit. But let me make some general points about how we can start creating not only more competition, but also more innovation in the energy sector.

When it comes to electricity, the traditional sources that we get electricity from are coal, natural gas, and some nuclear. That's typically the menu from which we get most of our electricity production at most of the big utilities. And the advantage, particularly of coal, is that it's been very cheap. We are the Saudi Arabia of coal. We've got a lot of coal.

But each of these fossil fuels that we use have some problems, particularly with pollution. And coal, in particular, in some of these old plants create a lot of particulates that go into the atmosphere and create all kinds of problems in terms of asthma, and it's also having an impact on the climate overall.

Nuclear doesn't produce greenhouse gases, but we've got problems in terms of storing waste. And obviously, we're heartbroken by what's happened in Japan, and that's raising questions about the safety of the existing storage mechanisms. And I know obviously there's a big debate here in Nevada about Yucca Mountain.

Natural gas, we actually have a lot of natural gas available, but getting to it has historically been a little bit difficult, and so now we're developing new technologies for that.

But when you think about what's going to be, sort of, our future electricity sources, I want to make sure that we are also the frontrunners, the leaders, when it comes to solar, when it comes to wind, when it comes to waste heat—[*laughter*]—geothermal, right? So there are a whole range of additional energy sources that we're just not tapping into, and that's what a company like ElectraTherm is all about.

Now, the question for ElectraTherm is—or any of these companies that are innovating—is there enough demand out there that they can start building to scale, they can start making the capital investments that allow them to catch up with these older ways of producing electricity that had a 50-year head start, right? I mean, if you built an old coal plant 30, 40 years ago, well, it's—whatever money you put into it, that's already sunk costs, and now you're producing electricity that may be relatively cheap, but it's also relatively dirty. And the question is, how do we make sure that new

companies with newer, cleaner technologies are able to catch up?

So one of the things that we've proposed is what's called a clean energy standard. It's a very simple concept. What it says is, the country, State by State, will purchase a certain amount of energy from these alternative sources. So we're not saying that immediately you shut down the old plants, because frankly, we couldn't. I mean, the economy needs a certain amount of electricity just to run our businesses and do everything that we do. But if we set a target and we say here's the amount of alternative energy that is going to be purchased every year, then suddenly, all these companies out here start saying, you know what, I've got some certainty. I know that if I invest in building a new plant that I'm going to be able to sell that electricity.

And that changes the economic incentives, and then the market can sort out which ones are the best: who's got the best company, who's got the best technologies, et cetera. It's not the Government saying—picking winners and losers, it's just saying get a certain amount from this option, this array of options of clean energy. That can make a huge difference.

Now, in addition to doing that, the other thing that we really have to do is make sure that as an economy, as a society, we just become more energy efficient generally. And that's a lot of what ElectraTherm is all about. They're capturing—when you're talking about waste heat, every business, every industry, is generating some sort of energy byproduct, some sort of heat; it's going up in smoke stacks and nobody is using it. And the question is, can we capture that energy and use it in a smart way? That's what ElectraTherm is all about.

But we waste energy everywhere: schools, hospitals, our homes. When we don't insulate our houses, when we don't have the kinds of windows that are properly insulated, when our air conditioning systems are all old and creaky and make a lot of noise, energy is being dissipated everywhere. Now, I think most people understand that, but the problem is that you might not have a couple thousand bucks initially to insulate your home. You don't have that kind of spare change lying around. Even though if you made the investment you'd get the money back in 3 or 4 or 5 years, you may not be able to make that investment on the front end.

So one of the things that we're doing, both for homeowners, but also increasingly for commercial buildings, we want to give you some incentives where we say, you know what, you buy that insulation, you make your home more energy efficient, we'll give you a tax break. Or we say to companies, you're going to make your building more energy efficient, we'll give you some money on the front end and then you can pay it back by the savings that you get on your electricity bill every month. So a combination of creating a market for clean and alternative energy and also providing incentives to consumers to be more energy efficient, you combine those two things, there's no reason why we can't have a brighter energy future. But it does require some investment from the Federal Government. That's why I'm not willing to see our investment in clean energy slashed by 70 percent, and that's part of the debate that we're having in Washington right now. All right?

Okay, this young lady right there. Go ahead. You got the microphone right here.

Health Care Reform/Medicare

Q. Jill Derby. I'm an educator who's fighting educational cuts in Nevada that will slash our education budget.

The President. Okay, Jill.

Q. But my question is about health care reform. I would say all of us in this room understand that the health care reform act that you championed and was passed is critical for the whole country, but somehow the opposition got the message ahead of us, and now there isn't widespread support. I want to know what you and others are doing to turn that around to help people realize how important that reform act is.

The President. Well, first of all, I appreciate the support and I appreciate the work you're doing on education. It turns out that when Social Security was passed, initially it was really

unpopular, and all kinds of lawsuits were brought against Social Security. And people said we were going socialist. Sound familiar? [*Laughter*] And now everybody loves Social Security, because once the program got up and running, people understood, you know what, this provides a basic floor, a baseline, so if something goes wrong in my life, even though I'm doing all the responsible things, even though I'm saving, I'm working hard every day, I'm looking out for my family, I'm doing what I'm supposed to do, if at the end, somehow, things didn't work out the way I planned, I've still got this baseline of savings.

Then, when Medicare was passed in the middle sixties, lo and behold, it turns out it was very controversial. And everybody said this is socialized medicine, and there were efforts to repeal it. And then once it got up and running, lo and behold, people said, you know what, it's a good thing that our senior citizens now, if they don't have the health care that they need, they don't have money, they have something to count on so that if they get sick they've got some support.

And I make that point just to say that every time we make a change like this, there are some folks who say no. And ordinary folks who aren't following the debate, all they hear is a lot of arguing; it makes folks uncertain about, well, is this thing actually going to work or not.

The big thing that we need is the 3 years that we designed to implement the plan. Now, we're already making progress. There are already changes that are benefiting you right now. Everybody who's sitting here right now, whether you know it or not, you're being benefited by the health care reform that we passed. If you've got a child who graduated from college, doesn't yet have a job that provides health insurance, you can keep that child on your health insurance until they're 26 years old. If you're a parent whose child has a preexisting condition, you now have to be able to get health insurance. An insurance company cannot turn you down from getting health insurance for that child.

Right now insurance companies can't drop you when you get sick. They can't impose arbitrary lifetime limits so that if you really get sick and you really need it, you don't find out right in the middle of treatment it turns out that you've already hit your limit and there's no more money left and you're on your own.

So we've already implemented a wide range of reforms. Small businesses are eligible right now for huge tax breaks; about a third of what small businesses pay for their employees to provide them health care, now they can deduct from their taxes. And that can save tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands on their health care bills. That's already going on right now.

Senior citizens, you're getting a $250 rebate on your drugs because of the health care bill. And by the time we've fully implemented it, that doughnut hole that used to be there, where if you got sick, you'd pay—Medicare would pay only up to a certain point, and then suddenly, you had to pick it up in your own pocket because of that doughnut hole, that's going to be fully closed. So we are making all sorts of reforms right now.

But the big change comes in 2014 when we're working with States, including Nevada, to set up a system so that you can be part of a big pool if you're on your own. If your employer doesn't provide you health insurance, you can be part of a big pool with all that purchasing power to get the same health care that Shelley Berkley and other Members of Congress get for themselves at reduced prices and higher quality.

The other thing that we did in health care reform bears on what I was talking about earlier, which is our deficit reduction. We were giving about $180 billion worth of subsidies to insurance companies under the Medicare program. It wasn't making seniors healthier, but it was making the profit margins for those insurance companies a lot healthier.

And we said, you know what, you're doing just fine without those subsidies. We are saying to providers, let's make some changes so instead of having multiple tests for one patient, let's have one test and then e-mail all the tests through electronic medical records to the

specialists that need to work with them. That saves us money.

Twenty percent of the sick account for 80 percent of the costs under Medicare, typically the chronically ill, folks who have diabetes, for example. So why not reimburse providers to help manage the illnesses of the chronically ill? That will save us money.

So part of what we're doing is providing care for people. Part of what we're doing is making sure that you as a consumer of health insurance are getting a fair deal for insurers. But part of what we're doing also is making the overall system more efficient. And that's how we'll save money in the long term.

That's the big debate that we're having about Medicare as part of this budget. There has been a proposal—it passed through Congress—that would essentially make Medicare a voucher system. Essentially, what Medicare would become is you'd get a certain amount of money and then you could use that money to buy health insurance on the private marketplace. But guess what. If health inflation keeps on going up, you're out of luck. If the insurance that you buy isn't good enough to cover you, too bad.

So what we've said is, no, we're not going to change Medicare as we know it. What we will do is work inside of Medicare to make sure that providers, the health care system as a whole is more efficient. We think that's the better way to go. And I think most folks on Medicare do too.

All right, let's see. Gentleman back there. Right there. Yes.

Fuel Efficiency Standards/Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources and Technologies

Q. John Galbraith, Geothermal Resources Council. Mr. President, we applaud and commend you for supporting clean, green, renewable, 24-hour baseload energy. Please describe your thoughts going forward. Can we expect the same?

The President. You can expect the same. We want to keep on giving the same incentives for clean alternative energies. We want to make sure that, for example, the tax credits that are in place, that we make those permanent so that folks aren't always in a guessing game each year as to whether or not they're going to be there for you.

We think that needs to be part of a overall, comprehensive energy package. And I was talking earlier about electricity generation, but obviously, what's on the minds of a lot of folks right now are gas prices. Let me just make this point: One of the key ways we're going to get gas prices down is just to use less oil, right? If you buy less, prices go down.

The best way for us to reduce usage is in the transportation sector. So a couple of things that we're doing already: Number one, we increased fuel efficiency standards on cars last year for the first time in 30 years—first time in 30 years. It's going to save us 1.8 billion barrels of oil. And by the way, we didn't do it through legislation. We got the car companies, autoworkers, environmental groups, we got everybody to agree that this made sense for America. So that's point number one.

Point number two is we want a million electric cars on the road. We want—[*applause*]—over the next several years, we want to develop electric cars and make them affordable for everybody. And Detroit is now making some good electric cars; the problem is they're still too expensive. A couple of things are involved in that. One is the technology for batteries is still not as developed as it needs to be. But here's the good news: We used to have 2 percent of the market for advanced batteries that go into electric cars; we are going to have 40 percent in 5 years because of the investments we made with the Recovery Act. We're going to have—40 percent of those batteries are going to be made here in the United States of America.

There is no reason why we can't get cars out there that are getting a hundred fifty miles per gallon. We've got the technology for it, we've just got to keep on investing it and developing it. And so one example of how we can really make a difference, it turns out as President I've got a lot of cars in my fleet. [*Laughter*] The Federal Government has the biggest fleet of automobiles of anybody, any organization. So

what we've said is, let's make our fleet a hundred percent alternative fuel cars.

And what that does, that creates a big market for American-made cars that are efficient. It puts people to work, but it also helps us free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil.

And now what we're doing—I was just over at a UPS facility in Maryland. We've gotten Federal Express, Verizon, AT&T, there are a bunch of companies now that are joining together, and they're doing the same thing with their truck fleets. So part of what this is all about is just creating a market.

And once you create a market—let me tell you, I have driven that—I didn't—when I say drove, they let me drive, like, 5 feet. [*Laughter*] They didn't really let me zip around there. But I've been in one of these Chevy Volts. That is a nice car. It drives really well.

And so the question is, can we start getting enough demand that prices go down? And think about it, I mean, it used to be having a flat-screen TV was a big deal, right? Now everybody is going into Best Buy, because it was such big volume that prices started going down; same thing with all technology. It's no different in the transportation sector. We can drive prices down, we just have to make sure that there's enough demand out there for them.

So for all of you out there who are still driving those 8-mile-a-gallon, big SUVs, some of you, that's the car you got to drive right now, you can't afford a new car, but when you do decide to buy a new car, think about the fact that we're putting a whole bunch of money into the pockets of some folks in some cases who don't like us at all.

We send billions of dollars to other countries, some of whom do not like us at all. We're just giving away our wealth. That makes no sense, and it's got to change, and we're going to change it. So all right.

It's a young lady's turn. Right here in the red, right in front. You got a microphone coming.

Scientific and Medical Research/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Q. Mr. President, my name is Courtney Miller. And I want to thank you for returning science to the national priority. And I need to ask for some help for my family. My husband has chronic fatigue syndrome, which is an illness very much like multiple sclerosis. And we spend billions of dollars in this country on roughly a million patients for disability and Medicare and lost tax revenue and lost productivity, and we spend less than $6 million for NIH research on this illness. And I'm asking you for my husband and my kids, who want their father to be able to go to their baseball games, if there's a way to make improvements on that.

The President. Well, let me, first of all, say that you are absolutely right that we've tried to put science back where it belongs. I am a Christian and a person of faith, and I believe that God gave us brains to figure things out and that we've got to use science to make life better for our families and our communities and this planet.

That's one of the reasons why part of the Recovery Act was reinvesting in National Institute of Health, NIH, which does a huge amount of the basic medical research that ends up then creating so many of the scientific advances that are making our lives longer and making our lives better.

Now, I will confess to you that, although I've heard of chronic fatigue syndrome, I don't have expertise in it. But based on the story that you told me, what I promise I will do when I get back is I will have the National Institute of Health explain to me what they're currently doing and start seeing if they can do more on this particular ailment, okay?

Gentleman there, back there with the beard. That's you. Oh, actually, I was calling on this guy with the beard, but I—[*laughter*]. That's all right, go ahead.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009/National Economy/Education

Q. Hi, I'm Will Adler. I'm a student at UNR. And currently we are facing millions—millions—in cuts. And you mentioned higher education earlier. I think it's the most important thing for America's future in general, and I'm just worried, with the rhetoric nowadays, that

the word "tax" is, like, the most evil word on Earth now. So our State in particular cannot raise enough revenues to support our higher education. I was wondering how we can change that rhetoric and get more funding in the State level and Federal to support our education for the future.

Thank you very much, Mr. Obama. I love you, by the way. I voted for you.

The President. Well, first of all, something that a lot of folks may not be aware of, you hear people say: "Oh, the stimulus didn't work. The stimulus didn't work. The recovery didn't work." Well, you know what, we had a terrible recession and shed so many jobs so fast that we had lost 4 million jobs before I came into office. We lost another 4 million probably in the first 6 months that I was in office, before any of my economic policies took effect. So we had a big hole we dug.

But when you look at the Recovery Act, about a third of it was direct support to State budgets. About a third of it was tax cuts; your taxes all got cut by the Recovery Act. Nobody knew it. And I don't blame folks for not knowing it because it was happening paycheck for paycheck, so the increments were relatively small each month and a lot of folks, if you saw your hours cut back or you had lost your job, you might not have felt it. But we cut taxes. That was about a third.

About a third of it was infrastructure investment. And about a third of it was support to States. And by the way, some of these same Governors who go on TV denouncing the Recovery Act, the stimulus, they took that money. [*Laughter*] And they used it to close their State budget deficits. I'm just saying. [*Laughter*] It is funny. Sometimes, you're watching TV and you say, hold on a second. [*Laughter*] That guy right there, he took that check. [*Laughter*] And he used it to balance his budget, and then he starts getting on TV complaining about how irresponsible we are. What are you talking about? It's not on the level sometimes.

But what happened as a consequence was for 2 years we were able to prevent some of the worst choices that States might have to make about laying off teachers and police officers and firefighters and so on.

Now the economy is growing again and State revenues are getting a little bit better. But I understand here in Nevada, the economy has been the slowest to recover because this is also where the housing boom was hottest. So that's put bigger strains on the budget here than just about anywhere.

So I recognize that a State like Nevada has to make tough choices. I just think it is very important in making those choices not to be shortsighted. If you're a family and you've got to tighten your belt, you might cut out eating out. You might say, you know what, we can't afford that vacation this year. But you're not going to decide not to replace the boiler if it has to be replaced. You're not going to decide not to fix a hole in the roof, because you know if it starts raining it's going to ruin the house. You're not going to say, we're going to use up all the savings we had for our kids' college education and still go on vacation, right? You're going to prioritize.

That's what we have to do at the Federal level, and that's what we have to do at the State level. And I don't think there is a more important priority than education.

Now, I think it's important that our education system is efficient like every other system. So universities—I've said to universities, try to figure out how you can reduce costs for students. Don't just ask for more money. You should also look at your operations to figure out are there ways that you can make it a better bargain for your kids. Because they've got to pay for it or somebody has got to pay for that tuition.

I mean, look, I'm a big supporter of State colleges and universities having nice facilities, but you go to some of these gyms and some of these athletic facilities, and I'm thinking, this is really nice. Shoot, I wouldn't mind being a member of this club.

And I've got to tell you, when I was going to college—I'm showing my age now where you start "when I was back in my day"—but it's true, like, the cafeteria was horrible. The food was bad. You didn't expect to get good food when you went to college. You go to the gym, it

had some old rusty weights, a medicine ball. You didn't have some gleaming, state of the art—I'm just using those as examples.

There are ways that universities have to cut costs as well. But ultimately, we've got to make sure that we're not cutting education unnecessarily. And you're right. In some cases, revenue is going to be necessary.

Now, how many people here know that not only did we cut your taxes when I first came into office, but back in December we just cut your taxes again? How many folks are aware of that? I mean, you wouldn't know it from watching TV. You would think I was just out there raising everybody's taxes; just these big-spending Democrats out there. We haven't raised your taxes; we've lowered your taxes. Because it was important during the recession to make sure that middle class families were able to land on their feet.

And that's actually helping absorb some of the increased costs of gas prices and food prices that are out there right now and helping to sustain consumer spending to keep the economy growing.

But at a certain point, as the economy begins to grow again, as people are getting back on their feet, we've got to go back and say to ourselves, you know what, there's no such thing as a free lunch. Taxes are lower now than they have been in a generation. Taxes are a lot lower now than they were under Ronald Reagan. They're lower than they were under Bill Clinton. They're lower than they were under George Bush, in many cases.

And what I've said is, at minimum, we should say, for those like myself who can afford it, let's pay a little bit more. Let's go—we can go back—if we went back to the Clinton rates for the wealthiest 2 percent, going back to the Clinton rates—you remember back in the nineties, the economy was doing really well, and rich people were doing just fine. And I can afford it. It's not that I like paying taxes. I don't like paying taxes. Nobody likes paying taxes. But if the choice is keeping my tax break or 33 seniors having to pay an extra 6,000 bucks for their Medicare, why would I want that—why would I wish that on those 33 seniors? If the choice is between me keeping my tax cut and a couple hundred kids being able to go get their Head Start, why would I want that?

This isn't a matter of charity; it's a matter of what we think it is to live in a good society. And I think it is good for me, it is good for my life if when I'm driving around, I'm saying to myself, you know what, that school is producing all kinds of kids who are smart and are going to help build America's future.

And I drive around and I see some seniors, and they're out for a walk. And I know, you know what, I'm glad that I live in a country where in their retirement years, they're going to be secure. That makes me feel good. That's the kind of country I want to live in. That's the kind of country you want to live in. And we've got to make sure we're willing to fight for it.

Everybody, thank you very much. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at ElectraTherm, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to former President George W. Bush. Participants referred to Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR).

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Culver City, California

April 21, 2011

The President. Thank you, everybody. Have a seat. Have a seat.

First of all, I just want to say how grateful I am to Ken and John for agreeing to take on the tough task of cochairing our finance committee here in southern California. They have been great friends and great supporters from the get-go. And I have to say, I did not realize John was that good on the introductions. [*Laughter*] I might have to take him on the road. [*Laughter*]

I also want to thank Michael and Amy who, you know, this is their shop, letting us crash their

space, when I know they're incredibly busy. I was just hearing about "Spider-Man 4"—[*laughter*]—so I'm all psyched up about that.

Audience member. Will you play a part?

The President. Seriously, I was—[*laughter*]—I'm very big on Spider-Man. I also want to acknowledge a wonderful public servant, one of the finest mayors in the country, Antonio Villaraigosa is here.

We set this up so that I am just going to go from table to table. And you guys can poke me and prod me—[*laughter*]—you know, lift the hood and kick the tires and give me what I'm sure will be wonderful advice. [*Laughter*] Looking around this room, this is not a shy group. [*Laughter*]

But what I want to say before I visit with all of you is how grateful I am. You know, many of you were involved in the 2008 campaign, and let's face it, it was not likely that I was going to end up in the Oval Office. It was possible, but not likely. And so many of you took this incredible leap of faith, in part because the campaign wasn't just about me. It was about how we could move the country in a new direction and how could we recapture that sense of community that, I think, had frayed for too long, and it prevented us from dealing with so many challenges that we face.

As John said, we've made incredible progress over the last 2½ years, but we've got so much more work to do. There are still a lot of folks hurting out there. We've got to put people back to work. We've got to grow the economy. We've got to reduce the deficit. We've got to pass immigration reform. We've got to have an energy plan that works for all Americans. And that's before I start talking about international affairs. [*Laughter*]

So my inbox keeps on filling up, but I welcome the challenge because I know that I have all of you behind me. I just want to remind you, as we're going around to the tables, that this is going to be just as hard, if not harder, than 2008. And I'm going to need all of you just as engaged, just as motivated, and taking as much ownership over the campaign as you did then.

That's part of what made 2008 special, was you owned it. It wasn't just top down. That's part of the reason why our campaign office is going to be in Chicago, first time in modern history that a President hasn't had his campaign office run out of Washington. Because I never want to lose touch. I never want to lose that sense that what this is about is not simply maintaining a status quo, but it's about how do we bring about the changes that are going to make a difference in people's lives.

So thank you, all of you, for being here. Thanks in advance for the extraordinary work that you're going to do over the next 18 months to make sure that we can finish the job that we started. And with that, let me join you all at the tables. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:39 p.m. in the Commissary restaurant at Sony Pictures Studios. In his remarks, he referred to John B. Emerson and Kenneth A. Solomon, cochairs, Southern California Finance Committee, Democratic National Committee; and Michael M. Lynton, chairman and chief executive officer, and Amy B. Pascal, cochairman, Sony Pictures Entertainment. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Culver City
April 21, 2011

The President. Hello, L.A.! Hello, Los Angeles! It is good to be back in L.A.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. Love you back. It's an honor to be here at Sony Studios stage 30. For those of you who thought you were being brought in here as extras for the new Spider-Man movie—[*laughter*]—you're at the wrong soundstage. [*Laughter*] I hope you'll stick around anyway.

We have some wonderful folks here, and I am so grateful for everybody and what they did

to participate in this wonderful event. But I just want to acknowledge a few folks. We've got a great congressional delegation coming out. Congressman Brad Sherman is here. Congresswoman Laura Richardson is here. Congresswoman Karen Bass is here. Controller John Chiang is here. All the elected officials, the community leaders, there are too many to mention, but I am grateful for all of you.

Now, I'm assuming that Jamie Foxx didn't say anything too crazy while he was out here, because if he did, I'll talk to him when I get backstage.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Well, actually, technically it's about five and a half. That's our goal.

Now, it is nice to be out of DC. The weather in DC is okay, but the conversation that you hear in Washington is very different from the conversation that you hear around kitchen tables and around water coolers. And that's why we recently decided that our reelection campaign will be the first one in modern history to be based outside of Washington, DC. We're going back to Chicago. I should add, by the way, that the Bulls just won. [*Laughter*] So maybe we'll see you in the finals. I know the Bulls will be there.

But look, here's the reason that we're going to be based outside of Washington. I don't want our campaign to be hearing only from pundits and powerbrokers and lobbyists. I want our campaign to be hearing from the folks who got me into the Oval Office. I want them hearing from you. I want to make sure we are putting the campaign in your hands, the hands of the same organizers, the same volunteers, the same neighborhood folks who proved last time that together, ordinary people can do extraordinary things. That's what this campaign is still about. I'm glad you're in. I hope you're all in.

Now, a few things have changed since the last time around. I'm grayer. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. [*Inaudible*]

The President. I'm all right? All right, I'm going to let Michelle know you said it's okay. [*Laughter*] See, folks here in Hollywood, they can go gray and they just say, well, that was just for a part and then they rinse. [*Laughter*] I can't do that. But even though some things have changed, all of us can still remember that night in Grant Park, the excitement on the streets, the sense of possibility. And I hope you also remember what I said to you that night. I said our work hadn't ended; we were just beginning. And that——

Audience member. I love you, President Obama.

The President. I love you too, sweetie. [*Laughter*] But what I said was that our climb would be steep. We would have a tough road ahead. I said we might not get there in 1 year; we might not even get there in one term. But I knew in my heart that together we would get there, that we would bring about the change that we had promised—promised, by the way, to each other. Because the campaign wasn't just about me, the campaign was you making commitments to each other about the kind of country that you wanted. You made a commitment to each other about the kind of future that we wanted for our children and our grandchildren.

Now, it turns out, let's face it, the climb was a little steeper than we anticipated. [*Laughter*] I ended up taking office in the middle of the worst recession since the Great Depression. Four million people had lost their jobs before I was sworn in; another 4 million lost their jobs in the first few months before our economic plan had a chance to take effect. Hundreds of thousands of people lost their jobs—millions of people lost their jobs, hundreds of thousands lost their homes.

It was a recession so bad that families all across America are still grappling with it. Some folks in this audience may still be dealing with the aftereffects. So we had to make some tough decisions, and we had to make them very quickly. And they weren't always popular.

But 2½ years later, the economy is growing again. Two and a half years later, we're creating jobs again. Two and a half years later, the financial system works again. Two and a half years later, small businesses are opening their doors again.

Over the last 4 months, we've seen the largest drop in unemployment since 1984. Over the last 13 months, we have created nearly 2 million private sector jobs. Some of the things that weren't popular that folks said wouldn't work have worked. We have a Big Three auto industry in Detroit that is back on its feet, making a profit again. GM announced it's hiring all its workers back.

So we've made progress, but our work is not finished. We're still climbing. We're still climbing because the summit we want to reach is a summit where every child in America has opportunity. The summit we want to reach is where we're looking out for each other if we're disabled or infirm or in our golden years. The summit we want to reach is where America is more competitive than ever before, where our economy is growing and everybody is sharing in the prosperity. That's the summit we want to reach.

And it's going to take more than a couple of years. It's going to take, in fact, more than one term. I am reminded of that almost every night, because every night I get letters from citizens all across the country. And some of these letters are heartbreaking. You read a letter about someone who's sent out 16 résumés and hasn't gotten a response back. Or a child writes you a letter and says: "You know, my mommy and daddy, they're losing their home. Is there something that you can do to help us?"

And sometimes, I'll stay up late just trying to figure out what is it that we haven't tried yet; what is it that we need to do to make sure that we're reaching every single one of those folks who are working so hard, doing the right thing, looking after their families, meeting their responsibilities, and they're still struggling out there. That's the reason that we ran. It wasn't for the title. It wasn't for the trappings of office. It was making sure we were delivering for those families all across America.

And our work is not done. But even though those are the Americans that I'm thinking about when I wake up in the morning and those are the Americans I'm thinking about when I go to bed at night, I want everybody to understand that we have made progress. Because of you, we have made progress.

That progress shouldn't make us complacent, but it should remind us of what is possible and it should inspire us to try to finish what we started in 2008.

Because of you, we were able to prevent a second Great Depression. Because of you, we know that we've got the chance of making sure that the new jobs, the new industries aren't located somewhere else, but they're located here in California, they're located here in the United States of America.

We've got to be prepared to win the future. Because of you, we've made college more affordable for millions of young people all across America. It used to be that the student loan program run through the Government would give billions of dollars to banks, unwarranted subsidies for acting as middlemen in the student loan program. We said, well, let's end that. Let's give the money directly to students. And as a consequence, millions of more students are able to benefit from a better deal.

We're not done yet, but we've started to reform some of the schools that needed reforming all across America. And because of our Race to the Top program, we're seeing better teachers in our classrooms, and we are seeing more support for our teachers and more resources for our teachers. And we are making sure that we're reaching into the schools that are underperforming here in Los Angeles and all across the country. Because of you, we've been able to accomplish that.

Audience member. We need your leadership.

The President. I'm ready to give it, but I'm going to need yours as well. Because of you, we made the largest investment in clean energy, in renewable energy in our history, investments that are already creating new jobs and new businesses.

But at a time of high gas prices—I know you've noticed it's rough out there. I admit Secret Service doesn't let me fill up the pump anymore. [*Laughter*] But it hasn't been that long since I did. You think about folks—and certainly here in Los Angeles, everybody understands this experience—if you've got to

drive 50 miles for your job, and you can't afford the new hybrid, so you got that old beater giving you 8 miles a gallon—[*laughter*]—and your budget is already strained, I mean, that's tough. But let me tell you something, we're already making a difference.

We have increased oil production, but more importantly, we've also said to ourselves, how are we going to find the kinds of alternative energy sources, the new energy sources that will reduce our dependence on foreign oil, but also clean up the planet in the process? That's something we need to invest in.

Because of you, we used to only have 2 percent of the world's advanced battery manufacturing in this country, a whole new industry. These are the batteries that go into these new electric cars. In 5 years, we're going to have 40 percent of that market. That's because of you, because you were able to get us in a position to make those decisions.

Because of you, we've increased fuel efficiency standards on cars that will save 1.8 billion barrels of oil. But we've got to do more. And to help pay for it, I don't know about you, but I think it's time we eliminated the $4 billion in taxpayer subsidies that we're giving to oil companies.

Now, they are making—keep in mind that the top five oil companies over the last 5 years, their lowest profits were 75 billion; their highest profits were 125 billion. That's money coming directly from your pocket into theirs.

Audience member. And we feel it.

The President. And you feel it. Now, companies make big investments. They're allowed to make a profit. But let me tell you, for them to get a $4 billion tax break at a time when they're making record profits and you're struggling to fill up your tank does not make sense. It has to stop. Let's stop subsidizing the energy sources of yesterday, and let's invest in the energy sources of tomorrow. That's what we're going to do because of you.

Because of you, we've put hundreds of thousands of folks back to work rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our infrastructure. Now we've got to make sure America is not just rebuilding and repairing the old infrastructure. We've got to be building the new infrastructure: the high-speed rail, the high-speed Internet, the smart grid that could help electricity move around in more efficient ways. That's part of what America has always been about.

We've had—I mean, I hate to be parochial here, but we've had the best stuff. [*Laughter*] But you know what, in some areas we don't. South Korea now has faster high-speed Internet than we do. You go to Beijing airport or Singapore airport—I mean, LAX—[*laughter*]—I'm just saying. It does not have to be that way. We can put Americans to work right now doing the work that needs to be done, but I'm going to need your help doing it, because our job is not yet finished.

Because of you, we did what folks have talked about for a hundred years. We said health care should no longer be a privilege in this country; it should be affordable and available to every single American. We said in America you shouldn't go broke just because you got sick. But we've got more work to do. We're implementing it now, and many of you are already benefiting from the changes we made, but there are some folks who want to dismantle it. We're going to have to protect it.

Because of you, we passed Wall Street reform to make sure that we don't have the same kinds of bailouts that we had before and to make sure that consumers are protected and not cheated when you take out a mortgage or a credit card. But there are some folks who want to roll that back; we've got to protect it.

Because of you, we passed a law that says women should get an equal day's pay for an equal day's work. Because of you, we overturned "don't ask, don't tell" so everybody could serve their country. Because of you, we got two more women on the Supreme Court, one of them the first Latina. And because of you, we removed a hundred thousand troops from Iraq and we have ended combat missions there just like I promised. That happened because of you.

But now we've got to protect the changes that we've made. We've got to—we've got some more changes we've got to make. We've still got to pass comprehensive immigration

reform so that we are a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. We've still got to have a more comprehensive energy policy. We've got to keep moving forward. We have to keep working for the America that we believe in, the America we want to leave to our children.

And that is the debate that we're having in Washington right now. That's what this budget debate is all about. You hear people talking about debt and deficits and spending and budgets. And yes, this is about numbers, but this debate is really about the kind of future that we want. It's about what kind of country we believe in. I believe in a country where the Government lives within its means. We've got to cut spending in Washington. We've got to cut domestic spending. We've got to cut defense spending. We've got to cut health care inflation. We've got to cut spending in our Tax Code, because we spend a lot through our Tax Code with loopholes and tricks. We've got to eliminate every dime of waste. And if we want to take responsibility for the debt that we owe, then we're going to have to make some tough decisions.

We've got to decide what we can do without to make sure we maintain those things that we care deeply about. And that requires shared sacrifice.

But let me tell you what I won't do. I will not reduce our deficit by sacrificing the things that have always made America great, the things that have made Americans prosper. I will not sacrifice our investment in education. I won't sacrifice scholarships for our students or medical research for our scientists. I won't sacrifice the safety of our highways or our airports. I will not sacrifice our investment in clean energy at a time when our dependence on foreign oil is causing Americans so much pain at the pump. I won't sacrifice clean air and clean water. I will not sacrifice America's future.

We need shared sacrifice, and that means, as part of our overall approach, ending tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans in this country. Let me tell you something. This is important. You know, look, a lot of folks right now, somehow they've gotten the idea that we've raised taxes. I have lowered everybody's taxes since I came into office. That's part of what the Recovery Act was all about; 30 percent of it were tax cuts. Folks might not have noticed it. [*Laughter*] It got spread out over all your paychecks. But those were tax cuts. And then this December we cut some taxes. Your payroll tax got cut because we wanted to make sure that we kept on going with the recovery.

So nobody here is just loving taxes. I just paid my taxes. [*Laughter*] And it was a pretty big tax bill. [*Laughter*] But I want everybody to understand it's not that I want to punish success. I want everybody here to be rich.

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.*]

I think somebody may have fainted here. This happens. They'll be fine. Give them some room. If we can get some medics in the front. Probably what they need is just a little bit of air, maybe a little bit of juice. They'll be okay. We'll get the medics up here in a second.

But in the meantime, look, I want all of you to be rich. Now, I don't mean just going out and buying lottery tickets. [*Laughter*] I want your small business to be successful. I want you to succeed in your careers. I want everybody to be successful. We don't want to punish success. But what we do want is a society where if we're going to ask everybody to sacrifice a little bit, we don't just tell millionaires and billionaires, oh, you don't have to do anything; you go ahead and just relax, count your money. [*Laughter*]

Look, I don't want a $200,000 tax cut for me that's paid for by asking 33 seniors each to pay more than $6,000 in extra Medicare costs. I don't want my tax cut paid for by cutting children from Head Start or doing away with health insurance for millions of people on Medicaid, for seniors in nursing homes or poor children or families that have a disabled child. I don't want to make that tradeoff.

And that's not a tradeoff that I think most Americans want to see, no matter what party you belong to, because that's not who we are as a country. We're better than that.

The America we know is great not just because of the height of our skyscrapers, not just

because of the size of our GDP. It comes because we've been able to keep two ideas together at the same time. The first is, is that we're all individuals endowed with certain inalienable rights and freedoms. We are self-reliant. We don't expect others to do for us what we can do for ourselves, and we don't like other people telling us what to do. That's part of what it's like to be an American.

But the second idea is that we're all in this together, that we look out for one another, that I am my brother's keeper, that I am my sister's keeper, that I want that child born in a tough neighborhood to have the same opportunities that I had so that someday they may be standing here instead of me.

And so, given the blessings that I've received, I want to look out for them, not out of charity, but it's because my life benefits from knowing when I'm driving down the street, look at that school that's well funded and those kids that are learning. And I see an elderly couple strolling down the street, and I say to myself, look at those folks, they're secure and they're comfortable in their retirement. And I see that person in a wheelchair going to work because somebody gave them opportunity, and I say, that's how we make sure that everybody can use their talents.

That makes my life better. That makes my life richer, knowing that everybody has a measure of dignity and respect and a shot at the American Dream. I don't do that for somebody else. I do it because it improves my life and it's going to improve Malia's life and Sasha's life.

That's our vision for America. It's not a vision of a small America; it's a vision of a big America—we do big things—a vision of a compassionate America and a caring America, an ambitious America. When I look at some of the debate in Washington and what some folks are saying, I say, they have a pessimistic view of who we are. Their basic attitude is we can't afford to look out for kids in poor neighborhoods. We can't afford to invest in our infrastructure. Yes, we're going to be driving around potholes and our airports are going to be mangy and—[*laughter*]—there's nothing we can do about it. We can't afford to make sure all of our seniors have the health care that they need.

That's not my vision for America; that's not your vision for America. My vision is for one where we're living within our means, but we're still investing in our future, and everybody is making sacrifices and nobody bears all the burden, and we live up to the idea that no matter what you look like or where you come from, whether you landed here—your ancestors landed here on Ellis Island or they came here on a slave ship or they just came over the Rio Grande, that we are all connected to one another and we all rise and fall together.

Los Angeles, that's the idea at the heart of America. That's the idea at the heart of our last campaign. That's the idea at the heart of this campaign. And that's why I'm going to need your help now more than ever. This campaign is in its early stages, but now is the time you can step up and help shape it and make sure we're out of the gate strong. And I know there are times where some of you have felt frustrated because we haven't gotten everything we wanted to get done right away. I know who you all are. [*Laughter*] I know the conversations you've been having: "Oh, I don't know. I don't like that compromise with the Republicans. I don't know. That health care thing, why did it take so long? I don't know. Obama, he's older now." [*Laughter*] "He used to look so fresh and exciting and—I still got that poster, but I don't know."

Look, there are times where I've been frustrated, just like you have been. But we knew this wasn't going to be easy. What also amuses me is when I hear people say: "Oh, well, the campaign was so smooth. Why is governing so tough?" [*Laughter*] And I try to remind them, "What campaign were you on?" [*Laughter*] What campaign were you on? It felt awful hard to me. [*Laughter*] I thought we made all kinds of mistakes.

We knew that on a journey like this there were going to be setbacks, there were going to be detours, there were going to be times where we stumbled and we had to get up and dust ourselves off and then keep going. Because we knew that at each and every juncture in our

history—when the future was on the line, when we were at the crossroads like we are right now—the country somehow came together. The country somehow found a way to make ourselves more prosperous and deal with the transition from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy and then to an information economy.

And we figured out how to absorb new immigrants and finally deal with the stain of slavery, make sure that women were full participants in our democracy.

At every juncture, we've been able to make the changes that we needed. So when you hear people say our problems are too big or we can't bring about the changes we seek, I want you to think about all the progress we've already made, and I want you to think about all the unfinished business that lies ahead. I want you to be excited about the next 18 months and then the next 4 years after that. And I want you to remind everybody else those simple words that summed up our campaign in 2008 and still sum up our spirit: Yes, we can.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:18 p.m. on Soundstage 30 at Sony Pictures Studios. In his remarks, he referred to actor Jamie Foxx. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 22.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Los Angeles, California
April 21, 2011

Thank you, Jeffrey. Technically, it's actually 5½ more years. [*Laughter*] Everybody, have a seat. Everybody, have a seat.

I'm going to be very brief. First of all, I just want to thank Jeffrey and Marilyn and all of you who were involved in helping put this together. Jeffrey has been an extraordinary friend from the start, and a lot of you got involved at a time when the prospect of electing a Barack Hussein Obama to the Oval Office was slim. None of you asked for my birth certificate. [*Laughter*] It was a complete leap of faith. [*Laughter*]

And so I don't want to spend a lot of time giving a speech. I want to just spend time with all of you at these tables.

A couple of people I just want to mention who are here. The Governor of the great State of California, Jerry Brown, is in the house. And our Ambassador to the Bahamas, Nicole Avant, is in the house. It's a nice gig, isn't it? [*Laughter*]

Anyway, as Jeffrey said, when we started this journey, and we actually started probably about 4 years ago, I think we understood that the country was at a crossroads and we were going to have to make some fundamental decisions so that we could make sure our kids, our grandkids, the next generation inherited the same kind of big-spirited America that we had inherited from our parents and our grandparents.

We didn't even know how steep the climb was going to be to get to where we needed to go, but we understood it was not going to be easy. The campaign wasn't easy. There's a lot of revisionist history going on now that, boy, his campaign was so smooth. It didn't feel that way at the time. [*Laughter*] I mean, it was hard. But we kept at it because we understood that a country that is generous and compassionate, that is looking after our children and making sure they've got a shot at the American Dream, that is making sure our seniors have dignity and security in their old age, that looks after families who've got a disabled child, that is investing in our infrastructure so that we can move products and services and people and information around rapidly, that is a benevolent influence around the world and is respected around the world—we understood that getting to where we needed to go wasn't going to be easy. And it hasn't been.

But we have made extraordinary progress over the last 2½ years. We've pulled this economy out of a recession. We've stabilized the fi-

nancial system. We've passed historic health care legislation to make sure 30 million people aren't going to go without coverage. We have repealed "don't ask, don't tell." We have put two women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina. We've passed equal pay for equal work.

We can go down the list. But we also know we've still got a lot more work to do. We've just started, and we've got a lot more work to do.

And there have been times, I'm sure, during the past 2½ years where you're reading the papers or you're watching TV and you're saying, "Oh, Obama, why is he compromising—the Republicans?" Or, "Oh, why did health care take so long?" And, "I want a single-payer plan anyway." [*Laughter*] And, "Golly, if he was just as good a communicator as George Clooney—[*laughter*]—then I'm sure the American people would understand exactly what needs to be done." Gosh. [*Laughter*]

That's understandable, because there have been times where I've been frustrated. But I don't want you to lose sight of how much we've gotten done. What we've done here has been historic, and we're only a quarter of the way through. And we've got a lot more work to do. And these budget debates that we're having now crystallize the debate that we're going to be having in this country over the next 18 months about who we are, what we care about, what our values are, what our commitments are to each other.

And I'm confident, because I travel around the country. And my poll numbers go up and down, depending on the latest crisis. And right now gas prices are weighing heavily on people. But when I talk to ordinary folks, they are not always paying attention. If you ask them what the makeup of the budget is, they'll say 25 percent of it goes to foreign aid. If you ask them about Medicare, they'll say, "I love that program, but I wish Government wouldn't get involved in it." [*Laughter*] Just because they're busy and they're tired, and they're working hard. They're looking after their families. They're looking after their kids.

Look, if I wasn't professionally in this, I wouldn't be following all these debates in Washington. But when you talk to them about their values, what they care about, then they say, of course we should make sure every child has a good education and gets opportunity. And absolutely we've got to make sure that our commitments to seniors are met. And of course we want a family whose child has a disability to make sure that child is getting everything possible to allow them to succeed. And yes, internationally, we want to stand on the side of human rights and democracy. And we understand the world is complicated. But we have a vision about what America should be in the world, and we want to live up to that. And yes, Government should live within its means, but we think we can live within its means and still ensure that we're delivering for the next generation.

I have faith in them. And I have faith in you. And so my closing comment, and then I'll come around and talk to all of you, is just remember the campaign in 2008. It wasn't about big crowds and nice posters. And it wasn't even about me. It was about commitments we made to each other as Americans, about who we are and what we care about. And those commitments have not ended. They didn't end on election day. They don't end when I take office. Those are commitments that we have to fight for and work for and be true to each and every day. And that's what this next 18 months are going to be about.

All right? Thank you, guys. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:22 p.m. at Tavern restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Jeffrey Katzenberg, chief executive officer, cofounder, and director, DreamWorks Animation SKG, Inc., and his wife Marilyn; and actor George T. Clooney. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 22. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Situation in Syria
April 22, 2011

The United States condemns in the strongest possible terms the use of force by the Syrian Government against demonstrators. This outrageous use of violence to quell protests must come to an end now. We regret the loss of life, and our thoughts are with the families and loved ones of the victims and with the Syrian people in this challenging time.

The Syrian Government's moves yesterday to repeal Syria's decades-old emergency law and allow for peaceful demonstrations were not serious given the continued violent repression against protesters today. Over the course of 2 months since protests in Syria began, the United States has repeatedly encouraged President Asad and the Syrian Government to implement meaningful reforms, but they refuse to respect the rights of the Syrian people or be responsive to their aspirations. The Syrian people have called for the freedoms that all individuals around the world should enjoy: freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and the ability to freely choose their leaders. President Asad and the Syrian authorities have repeatedly rejected their calls and chosen the path of repression. They have placed their personal interests ahead of the interests of the Syrian people, resorting to the use of force and outrageous human rights abuses to compound the already oppressive security measures in place before these demonstrations erupted. Instead of listening to their own people, President Asad is blaming outsiders, while seeking Iranian assistance in repressing Syria's citizens through the same brutal tactics that have been used by his Iranian allies. We call on President Asad to change course now and heed the calls of his own people.

We strongly oppose the Syrian Government's treatment of its citizens, and we continue to oppose its continued destabilizing behavior more generally, including support for terrorism and terrorist groups. The United States will continue to stand up for democracy and the universal rights that all human beings deserve in Syria and around the world.

The President's Weekly Address
April 23, 2011

This is a time of year when people get together with family and friends to observe Passover and to celebrate Easter. It's a chance to give thanks for our blessings and reaffirm our faith, while spending time with the people we love. We all know how important that is, especially in hard times. And that's what a lot of people are facing these days.

Even though the economy is growing again and we've seen businesses adding jobs over the past year, many are still looking for work. And even if you haven't faced a job loss, it's still not easy out there. Your paycheck isn't getting bigger, while the cost of everything from college for your kids to gas for your car keeps going up. That's something on a lot of people's minds right now with gas prices at $4 a gallon. It's just another burden when things were already pretty tough.

Now, whenever gas prices shoot up, like clockwork, you see politicians racing to the cameras, waving three-point plans for $2 gas. You see people trying to grab headlines or score a few points. The truth is, there is no silver bullet that can bring down gas prices right away.

But there are a few things we can do. This includes safe and responsible production of oil at home, which we are pursuing. In fact, last year, American oil production reached its highest level since 2003. On Thursday, my Attorney General also launched a task force with just one job: rooting out cases of fraud or manipulation in the oil markets that might affect gas prices, including any illegal activity by traders

and speculators. We're going to make sure that no one is taking advantage of the American people for their own short-term gain. And another step we need to take is to finally end the $4 billion in taxpayer subsidies we give to the oil and gas companies each year. That's $4 billion of your money going to these companies when they're making record profits and you're paying near-record prices at the pump. It has to stop.

Instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy sources, we need to invest in tomorrow's. We need to invest in clean, renewable energy. That's the long-term answer that we need. That's the key to helping families at the pump and reducing our dependence on foreign oil. We can see that promise already. Thanks to a historic agreement we secured with all the major auto companies, we're raising the fuel economy of cars and trucks in America, using hybrid technology and other advances. As a result, if you buy a new car in the next few years, the better gas mileage is going to save you about $3,000 at the pump.

But we need to do more. We need to harness the potential I've seen in promising startups and innovative clean energy companies across America. And that's at the heart of a debate we're having right now in Washington about the budget.

Both Democrats and Republicans believe we need to reduce the deficit. That's where we agree. The question we're debating is how do we do it. I've proposed a balanced approach that cuts spending while still investing in things like education and clean energy that are so critical to creating jobs and opportunities for the middle class. It's a simple idea: We need to live within our means while at the same time investing in our future.

That's why I so strongly disagree with a proposal in Congress that cuts our investments in clean energy by 70 percent. Yes, we've got to get rid of wasteful spending, and make no mistake, we're going through every line of the budget scouring for savings. But we can do that without sacrificing our future. We can do that while still investing in the technologies that will create jobs and allow the United States to lead the world in new industries. That's how we'll not only reduce the deficit, but also lower our dependence on foreign oil, grow our economy, and leave our children a safer planet. And that's what our mission has to be.

Thanks for listening, and have a wonderful Easter weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:15 p.m. on April 22 in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on April 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 22, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 23.

Statement on Armenian Remembrance Day
April 23, 2011

We solemnly remember the horrific events that took place 96 years ago, resulting in one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century. In 1915, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred or marched to their death in the final days of the Ottoman Empire.

I have consistently stated my own view of what occurred in 1915, and my view of that history has not changed. A full, frank, and just acknowledgement of the facts is in all our interests. Contested history destabilizes the present and stains the memory of those whose lives were taken, while reckoning with the past lays a sturdy foundation for a peaceful and prosperous shared future. History teaches us that our nations are stronger and our cause is more just when we appropriately recognize painful pasts and work to rebuild bridges of understanding toward a better tomorrow. The United States knows this lesson well from the dark chapters in our own history. I support the courageous steps taken by individuals in Armenia and Turkey to foster a dialogue that acknowledges their common history. As we commemorate the *Meds Yeghern* and pay tribute to the memories of those who perished, we also recommit

ourselves to ensuring that devastating events like these are never repeated. This is a contemporary cause that thousands of Armenian Americans have made their own.

The legacy of the Armenian people is one of resiliency, determination, and triumph over those who sought to destroy them. The United States has deeply benefited from the significant contributions to our Nation by Armenian Americans, many of whom are descended from the survivors of the *Meds Yeghern*. Americans of Armenian descent have strengthened our society and our communities with their rich culture and traditions. The spirit of the Armenian people in the face of this tragic history serves as an inspiration for all those who seek a more peaceful and just world.

Our hearts and prayers are with Armenians everywhere as we recall the horrors of the *Meds Yeghern*, honor the memories of those who suffered, and pledge our friendship and deep respect for the people of Armenia.

Remarks at the White House Easter Egg Roll
April 25, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody. I hope all of you had a wonderful Easter. I hope everybody is having a great time here. Welcome to the White House.

In addition to our outstanding Easter Bunny——

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Hi!

I want to introduce somebody who is doing extraordinary work not only helping military families, not only making sure that everybody is getting up and going, but is also keeping me in line, the First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Regarding Oil Subsidies
April 26, 2011

Dear _____:

I am writing to urge you to take immediate action to eliminate unwarranted tax breaks for the oil and gas industry, and to use those dollars to invest in clean energy to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

High oil and gasoline prices are weighing on the minds and pocketbooks of every American family. While our economy has begun to recover, with 1.8 million private sector jobs created over the last 13 months, too many Americans are still struggling to find a job or simply just to pay the bills. The recent steep increase in gas prices, driven by increased global demand and compounded by unrest and supply disruptions in the Middle East, has only added to those struggles. If sustained, these high prices have the potential to slow down the pace of our economy's growth at precisely the moment when we need to be accelerating it.

While there is no silver bullet to address rising gas prices in the short term, there are steps we can take to ensure the American people don't fall victim to skyrocketing gas prices over the long term. One of those steps is to eliminate unwarranted tax breaks to the oil and gas industry and invest that revenue into clean energy to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Our outdated tax laws currently provide the oil and gas industry more than $4 billion per year in these subsidies, even though oil prices are high and the industry is projected to report outsized profits this quarter. In fact, in the past CEO's of the major oil companies made it clear that high oil prices provide more than enough profit motive to invest in domestic exploration and production without special tax

breaks. As we work together to reduce our deficits, we simply can't afford these wasteful subsidies, and that is why I proposed to eliminate them in my FY11 and FY12 budgets.

I was heartened that Speaker Boehner yesterday expressed openness to eliminating these tax subsidies for the oil and gas industry. Our political system has for too long avoided and ignored this important step, and I hope we can come together in a bipartisan manner to get it done.

In addition, we need to get to work immediately on the longer term goal of reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and our vulnerability to price fluctuations this dependence creates. Without a comprehensive energy strategy for the future we will stay stuck in the same old pattern of heated political rhetoric when prices rise and apathy and neglect when they fall again.

I recently laid out my approach to a comprehensive strategy in my Blueprint for a Secure Energy Future, which includes safe and responsible production of our domestic oil and gas resources and doubling down on fuel efficiency in the transportation sector while investing in everything from wind and solar to biofuels and natural gas. None of you will agree with every aspect of this strategy. But I am confident that, in many areas, we can work together to help show the American people that we can make progress on an energy policy that creates jobs and makes our country more secure.

And I hope we can all agree that, instead of continuing to subsidize yesterday's energy sources, we need to invest in tomorrow's. We need to invest in a 21st century clean energy economy that will keep America competitive. In the long term, that's the answer. That's the key to helping families avoid pain at the pump and reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid; Senate Minority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell; Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner; and House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi.

Remarks to the White House Press Pool
April 27, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody. Now, let me just comment, first of all, on the fact that I can't get the networks to break in on all kinds of other discussions—[*laughter*]. I was just back there listening to Chuck [Chuck Todd, NBC News]. He was saying, "It's amazing that he's not going to be talking about national security." I would not have the networks breaking in if I was talking about that, Chuck, and you know it.

Q. Wrong channel. [*Laughter*]

The President. Right. [*Laughter*]

The—as many of you have been briefed, we provided additional information today about the site of my birth. Now, this issue has been going on for 2, 2½ years now. I think it started during the campaign. And I have to say that over the last 2½ years, I have watched with bemusement, I've been puzzled at the degree to which this thing just kept on going. We've had every official in Hawaii, Democrat and Republican, every news outlet that has investigated this, confirm that, yes, in fact, I was born in Hawaii, August 4, 1961, in Kapiolani Hospital.

We've posted the certification that is given by the State of Hawaii on the Internet for everybody to see. People have provided affidavits that they, in fact, have seen this birth certificate. And yet this thing just keeps on going.

Now, normally, I would not comment on something like this, because obviously, there's a lot of stuff swirling in the press at any given day, and I've got other things to do. But 2 weeks ago, when the Republican House had put forward a budget that will have huge consequences potentially to the country, and when I gave a speech about my budget and how I felt that we needed to invest in education and

infrastructure and making sure that we had a strong safety net for our seniors even as we were closing the deficit, during that entire week the dominant news story wasn't about these huge, monumental choices that we're going to have to make as a nation. It was about my birth certificate. And that was true on most of the news outlets that were represented here.

And so I just want to make a larger point here. We've got some enormous challenges out there. There are a lot of folks out there who are still looking for work. Everybody is still suffering under high gas prices. We're going to have to make a series of very difficult decisions about how we invest in our future, but also get a hold of our deficit and our debt, how do we do that in a balanced way.

And this is going to generate huge and serious debates, important debates. And there are going to be some fierce disagreements, and that's good. That's how democracy is supposed to work. And I am confident that the American people and America's political leaders can come together in a bipartisan way and solve these problems. We always have.

But we're not going to be able to do it if we are distracted. We're not going to be able to do it if we spend time vilifying each other. We're not going to be able to do it if we just make stuff up and pretend that facts are not facts. We're not going to be able to solve our problems if we get distracted by sideshows and carnival barkers.

We live in a serious time right now, and we have the potential to deal with the issues that we confront in a way that will make our kids and our grandkids and our great-grandkids proud. And I have every confidence that America in the 21st century is going to be able to come out on top just like we always have. But we're going to have to get serious to do it.

I know that there's going to be a segment of people for which, no matter what we put out, this issue will not be put to rest. But I'm speaking to the vast majority of the American people, as well as to the press. We do not have time for this kind of silliness. We've got better stuff to do. I've got better stuff to do. We've got big problems to solve. And I'm confident we can solve them, but we're going to have to focus on them, not on this.

Thanks very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:48 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House.

Statement on Tornado Destruction in Alabama and the Southeast
April 27, 2011

Michelle and I extend our deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their lives because of the tornadoes that have swept through Alabama and the southeastern United States. Our hearts go out to all those who have been affected by this devastation, and we commend the heroic efforts of those who have been working tirelessly to respond to this disaster. I just spoke to Governor Bentley and told him that I have ordered the Federal Government to move quickly in our response and informed him that I approved his request for emergency Federal assistance, including search and rescue assets. While we may not know the extent of the damage for days, we will continue to monitor these severe storms across the country and stand ready to continue to help the people of Alabama and all citizens affected by these storms.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City
April 27, 2011

I'm going to use a mike just because we've got two rooms. Everybody, please have a seat. Sit down, sit down.

I'm among a lot of friends, and I, first of all, obviously want to thank Jon and Sharon for hosting us in this extraordinary venue. These

guys have been just great friends from the start. Some of you know that Jon was a big supporter of mine in my first U.S. Senate race, when nobody could pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] And I had a chance to meet Sharon then and could already see that—where that was going. [*Laughter*] So it is wonderful to see them together as newlyweds, and we are just thrilled to be with them.

I also want to thank Orin and Michael for the extraordinary work that you guys did. I know that you guys worked really hard as cohosts to this event, and I'm very grateful. They have both been longtime supporters and longtime friends, and I really appreciate them. So give them a big round of applause.

So today was a fun day. [*Laughter*] I wasn't—nobody checked my ID at the door. [*Laughter*] But it was also a serious day because part of what happened this morning was me trying to remind the press and trying to remind both parties that what we do in politics is not a reality show. It's serious.

I get, as many of you know, 10 letters a night from citizens all across the country. And the letters you get, some of them are heartbreaking; almost all of them are inspiring. And the story these letters tell are of people who have done everything right, are looking after their families, are looking after their communities, are participating in Little League, are members of their church or their synagogues, and active participants, volunteer, and yet are worried. They're worried about the direction of our country. They're worried about their specific circumstances.

Sometimes, I get letters from children who are worried about their parents losing a job. And I get letters from parents describing what it's like to send 16 résumés out and not get a response. I hear from families who are worried about losing their homes. I worry about small businesses who have put their heart and soul and everything they own into something that was working and now suddenly, credit has been pulled back and they're not sure if they're going to make it.

And most of all, I think what you find are people who are worried about the future of the American Dream. Now, everybody here, almost by definition, has lived out that American Dream. We have been extraordinarily blessed by a country that historically has provided more opportunity to more people than any other in history. Many of us are children of immigrants. Sharon was just describing what it was like for her parents to come here from other countries—in some cases, fleeing the Holocaust—and somehow being able to make a life for their families and then ultimately see their children and their grandchildren succeed in ways that they never dreamed before. And that's the story for most of us.

And the question is, will that same story be told by our children and our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren? And more importantly, will it be told by the folks who do all the work here in New York City and all across the country, washing dishes and maintaining lawns and working at factories? Are they going to be able to tell that same story?

That's what prompted me to run for the United States Senate when Jon first supported me; that's what prompted me to run for President. I wanted to be the advocate for an America that continues to offer opportunity to everybody, regardless of race and creed and color.

And I didn't expect that not only I would have the extraordinary honor of taking this highest office, but also doing so at a time when we were facing the worst crisis since the Great Depression. Now, we've spent 2 years cleaning up after a big mess. And not all the decisions that we made were popular. I think most of the decisions we made were right. Because of the actions that we took swiftly upon coming into office, the financial system stabilized. And I think that if you asked anybody back in March of 2009 whether we were going to see almost all of the losses on Wall Street recover, the financial system working again at relatively modest costs to taxpayers, I think most of us would have taken that scenario.

We have a auto industry that for the first time in a very long time is turning a profit and has hired back workers instead of laying them off. We have been able to take an economy that was shrinking at about 6 percent per

quarter and is now growing, and we've added 2 million jobs over the last 13 months in the private sector alone.

So we've made extraordinary process. And along the way, we've done a few other things, like make sure that families aren't going bankrupt because they get sick and making sure that equal pay for equal work is a reality and appointing a couple of women to the Supreme Court—because, Lord knows, we need more women on that Court—and ending policies like "don't ask, don't tell" that were prohibiting people who loved each other from being able to serve.

So we've made enormous progress, but those letters tell me that we haven't made enough. We've still got a lot of work to do. We've got a lot of work to do to continue to lower the unemployment rate and grow the economy. We've got a lot of work to do to make sure that we get control over a deficit and debt that is a serious threat to our long-term future. And we've got to do it in a way that ensures that we're making the investments that allow us to be competitive in the 21st century: investments in education, investments in infrastructure, investments in basic research and science, which have always been the hallmark of a dynamic American economy.

We've got a lot more work to do to fix an immigration system that's broken. And we have a lot more work to do to make sure that we've got an energy policy that works. So I am not satisfied with the progress we've made, but we're on the right track.

One other area that I'm not satisfied about is the fact that we haven't been able to create the kind of politics that, I think, we're going to need to meet all these challenges. Partly because of the stresses of the recession over the last couple of years, politics is as polarized as ever. And I think the hope that I have that we would start coming together in a serious way and have a serious debate about how we move the country forward has been resisted. I won't say that the Democrats have never been at fault in that, but I will say that my administration and, I think, Democrats in Congress are serious about trying to solve these problems and not simply to score political points. And I think it can be done.

But part of what's going to have to happen is that serious politics will need to be rewarded. We're going to have, between now and 2012, a serious debate about the kind of America we believe in. And it is my intention to make sure that as hopeful as 2008 was, I want 2012 to be an election in which we're not just talking slogans, we don't just have pretty posters, but we are looking soberly at the choices we face. Because ultimately, I think if we had a serious debate, not only will Democrats win, not only will I win, but I think America will win.

I think the American people have good instincts. They're busy, they are preoccupied with family and work, and so sometimes, they're not always paying close attention to these debates. But there is a clarifying moment that is occurring now, symbolized by the debate between the House Republican budget and the budget that I presented in terms of how we deal with deficit and debt that, I think, will focus people's attention.

And we've got the potential, I think, to make some decisions that are going to have ramifications for the next 50 years. I'm optimistic we'll make the right decisions. And I'm optimistic that for the next 5½ years, I'm going to be able to do my part in leading the country in a good direction.

But I'm not going to be able to do it alone. I'm going to have to have the help of all of you. And as I said, in 2008, it was—I had a lot less gray hair—[*laughter*]—and it was exciting, partly because it was so unlikely that I could be elected. And now I'm the incumbent, and folks have various disappointments, and well, he hasn't gotten this done fast enough, and we're still waiting for that to happen.

And that's understandable. We're not going to have the same kind of campaign entirely that we had in 2008. But the animated spirit behind it, the desire to make sure that that American Dream is available for everybody and that we have—when we have tough decisions to make, we have shared sacrifice, no single group or person is bearing that burden, and that we're

also making sure that we've got shared opportunity and access—that animating spirit at the core of my campaign, the belief that there's a lot more that we have in common than what drives us apart, that hasn't changed. And my enthusiasm for this job and my optimism about America is not diminished.

So I hope that all of you guys understand that this is going to be a long, hard road. In some ways, it's going to be a little bit harder than the first time around. But I'm confident we're going to succeed. And I'm confident America is going to succeed. And in part, all of you make me confident about that.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:05 p.m. at the residence of Jon S. and Sharon M. Corzine. In his remarks, he referred to Orin S. Kramer, general partner, Boston Provident, LP; and Michael Kempner, president and chief executive officer, MMW Group. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 28. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City
April 27, 2011

The President. Hello, hello, hello! Thank you. Everybody, have a seat. Thank you. My name is Barack Obama. I was born in Hawaii. [*Laughter*] I'm President of the United States, and I'm running for reelection. Nobody checked my ID on the way in. [*Laughter*] But just in case—[*laughter*].

We've got some wonderful guests here today. First of all, two of the finest Senators that you could ever hope to have, the senior Senator from the great State of New York, Chuck Schumer is in the house. And the far more attractive—[*laughter*]—junior Senator, Kirsten Gillibrand is here. One of my great friends, somebody who I always enjoyed being with when I was in the United States Senate, from the great State of New Jersey, Frank Lautenberg is in the house.

To all the Members of Congress who are here; to all the New York State and New York City elected officials who are here: Thank you for the extraordinary work that you do each and every day. We're very proud of you.

To the Knicks, Jets, Giants, Rangers: Thank you for bringing hope back to New York City. My Bulls are doing pretty good, though. [*Laughter*] I mean, I'm just saying. [*Laughter*] Did I hear a boo there? Come on. [*Laughter*]

So look, I do not have prepared remarks partly because I'm among friends. And what I do want to talk to you a little bit about is not just the campaign that's coming up, but where we've been over the last 2½ years and where we need to go over the next 20.

When we ran in 2008, I think all of us had a sense that America was at a crossroads, that for the previous decade, what had happened to families all across America was they were working just as hard as they'd ever worked; they were fulfilling their responsibilities to their family, to their communities; volunteering in their synagogues, churches, places of worship; they remained committed to achieving the American Dream through hard work, and yet somehow it felt like that dream was slipping away.

During those 10 years, the income and wages of the average American actually went down when you factored in inflation. The economy was growing. A lot of us in this room were doing very well, but for a lot of folks, their life chances felt diminished. And when they looked out on the horizon, it looked like things weren't going to get better, they were going to get tougher.

And that was all before the worst recession since the Great Depression. By the time I was sworn in, we had already lost 4 million jobs in the previous 6 months. In the next 6 months, before our economic policies had a chance to take effect, we lost another 4 million. The financial system was on the brink of collapse. We were about to see the liquidation of the U.S. auto industry.

And yet because of the work, in part, of people like Chuck and Kirsten and Carolyn and others who worked so hard in Congress, what we were able to do is right the ship. We had to take some unpopular decisions, and we had to do some things that people weren't sure were going to work. But we made those tough decisions. And as a consequence, an economy that was shrinking is now growing. An economy that was shedding jobs over the last 13 months, we've created 2 million jobs in the private sector. The stock market is almost fully recovered. The financial system has stabilized. And people have a sense that this recovery may finally start building some steam.

And along the way, we did a few other things, like make sure that families in this country who get sick don't get bankrupt or lose their homes because of it, because we passed health care reform.

We passed laws to make sure that equal pay for equal work was a reality here in the United States of America and my daughters don't have to settle for less. We put a couple more women on the Supreme Court—Lord knows we need them—including the first Latina on the Supreme Court, Sonia Sotomayor.

We changed the financial aid system, the student loan system. We were giving subsidies to banks unnecessarily and restricting the amount of help that young people who wanted to go to college could get. And because of changes that we made, you've got millions of young people all across the country who are now able to go to college and take on less debt and achieve their dreams.

We brought home 100,000 troops from Iraq like we promised, and the rest of them are going to be home by the end of this year. We signed a peace—a nuclear reduction treaty with the Russians. We made sure that anybody who wants to serve in our military can serve regardless of sexual orientation.

So we got a lot of work done. That's just a partial list. But what I want to talk to you about today is the fact that what we've done isn't enough. We've got more work to do. I get letters from about 40,000 people every day, letters or e-mails. And my staff responds to all of them, but I get a chance to read about 10 of them each night. And these letters are inspiring, but they can also be heartbreaking, because you will hear from a father who writes about what it's like to send 16 résumés out, 20 résumés out, 30 résumés out and not getting a response, trying to figure out how he explains to his children why they're having to cut back.

Or you get a letter from a child who says, "My parents tell me we may have to sell our home, and, Mr. President, is there something that you can do?" I'll get letters from the families of servicemembers who have been killed in action in Afghanistan. And I'll get letters from young people who are hoping to go to college, but aren't sure whether they're going to be able to afford it.

And when I read these letters, I'm reminded of why we started on this journey together 3, 4 years ago. I'm reminded that the only reason for public service is not for the perks of office, it's not for the title, it's to be an advocate for all those families, to make sure that America is as good to the next generation as it's been to us.

Now, I look around this room, and a sizable percentage of all of you, your parents might have been immigrants. Your parents might not have had a lot, but they had hopes and dreams for you. They understood that if they worked hard, if they were willing to sacrifice, if they were willing to pour all that blood, sweat, and tears into you, that you might be able to achieve something they couldn't imagine achieving.

And the reason I ran for President is because I want to make sure that's true for the next generation. I want to make sure that every family out there feels that way, that if they do the right thing, if they're working hard, that they can achieve. And we know how to do it. We know how to do it.

We believe in free enterprise. We believe in entrepreneurship. We believe in individual liberties. We believe in self-help. But we also believe in community. We also believe in looking out for one another. We also believe in the American family. We also believe that America, at its best, is one that invests in education for everybody and invests in science and technology for the future and invests in infrastruc-

ture so we can move people and services and products all around the world; and invests in our seniors to make sure that they can retire with dignity and respect; and looks after the most vulnerable, looks after that child with autism or that child with a severe disability. That's who we are. That's what we believe. And that's the America I want to leave to Malia and Sasha. That's the America that you want to leave to your kids.

And we can achieve it. We're part of the way there, but we're not all the way there. We've still got a lot of work to do. We still have a lot of work to do. And that's what this budget debate that has dominated Washington over the last several months and will dominate Washington over the next year, year and a half, is all about.

It's not about numbers. We all agree that we have to reduce our deficit and get a hold of our debt. We even agree on roughly the amounts by which the deficit and the debt have to be reduced. This argument is not about numbers, it is about values. Because on one side you have folks who believe that we can slash education funding by 25 percent or transportation funding by 30 percent or investments in clean energy by 70 percent and we can turn the Medicare system into a voucher program so that we're shifting costs on to seniors. It's a vision of a small America, of a shrunken America, where those of us who are lucky do great and don't have to give anything back and we can pull up the ladder behind us.

And then there's another vision that says we can live within our means as a Government, we can act responsibly in terms of our budget, but we can make sure that the burden is shared, that the sacrifices are spread around.

And the reason we believe that is not out of charity. The reason we believe that is we think that our lives are better if, when we're driving down the street and we see those kids in a well-funded, well-run school that's teaching them something, we know that New York City, New York State, and the United States of America are going to be better places for us. They're going to be more safe and more secure.

We do it not just out of charity, but because it makes our lives better. We know that when we see that elderly couple strolling through Central Park, holding hands, and they know that they've got the security of Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security, that that makes us better, because we think, you know, someday I want to be Michelle—I want it to be me and Michelle strolling down Central Park. There's going to be a time where I can go walking again. And I would want to make sure that I've got some security in those golden years.

We imagine a big America where we're investing in the same kind of science that invented the Internet. We want to invent the next big energy breakthrough that is going to make sure that we're no longer dependent on foreign oil and we can start finally doing something about climate change and we're not vulnerable to huge spikes in gasoline prices. We want that transformation starting here in the United States of America.

And we want the best roads and the best airports, because we've always had the best stuff. We want the fastest broadband lines. And we want the highest graduation rates from college. That's who we are. That's the country we want to pass on to the next generation, and that's what this budget debate is all about.

Don't let folks fool you, saying this is somehow about some dry number somewhere. This is about our values, the kind of country we want to pass on to the next generation. And I'm confident that vision of a big, generous, compassionate America, that's the vision that most Americans share.

So we're going to have some work to do. This is not going to be easy. In 2008, I didn't have all this gray hair. [*Laughter*] I was kind of fresh and new. I was, like, the hip thing. [*Laughter*] Everybody had the nice posters. [*Laughter*] You know, so it was cool to back Obama. [*Laughter*] And now I'm older. [*Applause*] That's okay. Let's face it, I'm a little older.

Audience member. Distinguished!

The President. Distinguished, that's the word I'm looking for—[*laughter*]—distinguished. And we've had some setbacks, and some things haven't happened as fast as people wanted

them to happen. I know. I know the conversations you guys have. [*Laughter*] Oh, he didn't get the public option, and—[*laughter*]—gosh. I wish that that energy bill had passed. I understand the frustrations. I feel them too.

But here's what I know. When I stood in Grant Park that night, I told all of you this is not going to be easy. I didn't say, "Change you could have tomorrow." [*Laughter*] I said, "Change we can believe in." But it requires faith. It requires us working hard. It requires staying with it. It requires persistence.

That's why I'm going to need you, every single one of you. And if you join with me in 2012, I guarantee you we're going to get the job done.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:08 p.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney; and Supreme Court Associate Justice Elena Kagan. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 28.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City
April 27, 2011

The President. Hello, New York! Thank you. How's everybody doing tonight? Thank you. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat.

Audience members. Fired up!

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Are you fired up? Is that what you're saying? I'm fired up too. My name is Barack Obama. I was born in Hawaii, the 50th State of the United States of America. No one checked my ID on the way in—[*laughter*]—but just in case—[*laughter*].

I was out in Chicago earlier today. I was taping "Oprah" for one of her last shows. I was a little disappointed, though. When I looked under my seat, there was nothing there. [*Laughter*] There——

Audience members. [*Inaudible*]

The President. The——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. See, there's always something going on in New York City. [*Laughter*] Always.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back.

So it is good to get out of DC. DC is a wonderful town, but the conversation you hear in Washington is just a little different than the conversation you usually hear around the kitchen table or around the water cooler.

And that's why we recently decided that our reelection campaign will be the first one in modern history to be based outside of Washington, DC. We're going back to Chicago, because I don't want a campaign where I'm just hearing from lobbyists and pundits and powerbrokers. I want our campaign to be hearing from the people who helped me to get to the Oval Office. I want to be hearing from you.

We're making sure we're putting the campaign in your hands, the same organizers, the same volunteers, the same people who proved that we could do——

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Okay.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Okay, thank you. All right, so let me just say—no, they can stay. I think they made their point. They're all right. That's all right. But if any of the rest of you have something to say—[*laughter*]—let's just knock it out right now. So—[*laughter*].

All right, where was I? [*Laughter*] I was talking about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. And by the way, I just want you to know that Jim Messina, who has been by my side since this campaign began, he is going to do a great job. He is going to be doing a great job on our behalf. We're very proud of him.

Which reminds me, by the way, I know the reason you guys are all fired up is because the Roots were playing. [*Laughter*] So give the Roots a big round of applause.

So that's what this campaign is still about. It's your campaign. It's not my campaign, it's your campaign.

Now, a few things have changed since 2008. I'm a little grayer. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Looking good!

The President. Thank you. [*Laughter*] Thank you. Michelle thinks so also. [*Laughter*] You know, I've got a few dents, a few dings in the fender. But all of us can still remember that night in Grant Park—the excitement, the sense of possibility. And I hope you also remember what I said back then. I said this wasn't the end, this was the beginning, that our climb was going to be steep to the summit where we wanted to get to.

Now, it turns out the climb was a little steeper than we expected. [*Laughter*] We took office during the worst recession since the Great Depression, one that left millions of Americans without jobs, hundreds of thousands of people without homes. It was a recession that was so bad that we still see the lingering effects, people still grappling with the aftershocks.

So we had to make some tough decisions, and some of those decisions weren't always popular. But 2½ years later, an economy that was shrinking by 6 percent is now growing. Over the last 4 months, we've seen the largest drop in unemployment since 1984. Over the last year, we've added nearly 2 million jobs to the private sector.

Some of those things that folks said wouldn't work, they worked. Remember, we were about to see the U.S. auto industry liquidate. Now GM has hired back all its workers, and the Big Three are making a profit again. But we've still got work to do.

Audience member. Oh, yes, we do. [*Laughter*]

The President. [*Laughter*] We do. She's just speaking the truth. We still got work to do. You know, when I decided to run—and some of you were on this journey 3 years ago, 4 years ago, when folks couldn't pronounce my name—[*laughter*]—what we understood was that even before the recession, folks all across the country were feeling that that American Dream was starting to slip out of their grasp.

I look out, and one of the things I love about coming to New York is, it is so representative of what America has always been: people coming from all corners of the world. Immigrants, people traveling in search of opportunity and saying to themselves, you know, if I work hard, if I take care of my responsibilities, if I pour all that blood, sweat, and tears into a future for my children and grandchildren, there's nothing they can't achieve. Now, that's the idea of America. That's the idea of New York City.

And all across this country, there are people who still believe in that. They're working so hard every day. They're looking after their families. They're looking after their communities. They're in their churches and synagogues and mosques. They're volunteering. They're mentoring. They're coaching Little League. And yet they've been feeling, even before the recession hit, that maybe this American Dream, this idea of America was starting to slip away.

They had seen 10 years in which the average income, average wage of Americans had fallen, a country that was becoming more unequal, a country where even if you worked hard, you might not be able to retire with the kind of security that you used to expect, a country where the cost of college tuition was skyrocketing, where getting sick might mean that you lose everything you had.

And so we understood America was at a crossroads and that we were going to have to make some serious changes to ensure that the kind of America we believed in was going to be there in the future. That's what we were fighting for, where every child in America can live that life of opportunity, where every family feels like that dream is theirs. It's an idea of America where we're looking out for one another, where folks who are poor or disabled or infirm or in their golden years, that they know they've got a community.

We believe in free markets. We believe in entrepreneurship. We believe in personal responsibility and self-help. But we also believe that we're a family. And we also believe in an America that's growing and the next generation does better than this one, more prosperous than it was before. And that prosperity is shared. It's not just for a few, but it's for everybody. That's the summit we wanted to reach.

And look, for all the things we've gotten done, we're not there yet. My biggest adversaries aren't my political opponents. My biggest adversary is the cynicism that can be so corrosive when people stop believing in this idea of America. And what we've always been about is understanding that there's nothing we can't achieve if we're working together. And it's going to take a couple more years to get there. It might take more than one term to get there. But I'm reminded every night when I read letters from families all across America that we have no choice but to get there.

Some of you know that I read 10 letters a night out of the 40,000 or so that we get. And these letters are inspiring, but they are also sometimes heartbreaking. You read a letter from a father who's sent out 20, 30, 40 résumés and hasn't gotten a response back; or a child writes and says: "My parents are about to lose their home. Is there something that you can do?" You hear from parents of those who've fallen in Afghanistan, or you hear about a young person who is not sure whether they're going to be able to afford to go to college, and you're reminded of why we did this, the commitment we made to each other.

Those are the Americans I'm thinking about every day when I wake up. I think about them when I go to bed at night. They are the reason you elected me President. You didn't elect me so that I'd have a fancy title or a nice place to live. My house in Chicago was just fine. [*Laughter*] You elected me to make a real difference in the lives of people across this country, to make sure they were getting a fair shot.

And we've been able to make great progress over the last few years. But that progress shouldn't make us complacent. It should remind us that change is possible. And it should inspire us to finish what we started.

Because of you, we were able to prevent a second Great Depression. But in the next few years, we've got to make sure that the new jobs and industries of our time are started right here in the United States of America. In the next few years, we have to make sure that America is prepared to win the future.

Because of you, we ended wasteful taxpayer subsidies that were going to banks and instead used those savings to provide millions of students more affordable student loans and grants.

Because of you, we've raised standards for teaching and learning in schools across the country through what we call Race to the Top. But now we've got to finish reform and make sure every child is graduating and ready for college and ready for a career and that we're prepared to outeducate and outcompete every other nation in the world. That's how America will succeed.

Because of you, we made the largest investment in clean energy in our history, and that's already changing how jobs and businesses across the country are thinking about energy. We're creating new businesses: advanced battery manufacturing and plants building wind turbines and solar panels. But at a time when gas prices are——

Audience member. Four dollars. [*Laughter*]

The President. ——just killing folks—tough. A lot of truthtellers here. [*Laughter*]

We've got a lot more work to do to have an energy policy that works. We're going to have to keep on making those investments. And by the way, we can afford them. You know, for $4 billion, we could do an awful lot. And you know where we could get $4 billion is by ending taxpayer subsidies we give to oil companies and gas companies. That's profits coming from your pocket into their pocket. They're making enough profit. We should be investing in the energy of the future, not yesterday's energy.

Because of you, we've put hundreds of thousands of people back to work rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, our roads, our bridges. You know, part of America has always been building stuff, having the best stuff: trains and roads and ports and airports, and now in the 21st century, high-speed rail and the best wireless and the best broadband to make sure that we're pulling this economy together.

But you know what, we've fallen behind. Today, South Korea has faster high-speed Internet than we do. We created the Internet. [*Laughter*] We should be leading. We shouldn't

be 2d or 3d or 5th or 16th place when it comes to technology, innovation, investing in basic science and research.

Because of you, we did what we said we were going to do—what we tried to do for almost a century—and that is, we said health care should no longer be a privilege, it should be a right in a country this wealthy. We said you should never go bankrupt because you get sick. Your child should be able to get health care even if they've got a preexisting condition. That's because of you.

Because of you, we passed Wall Street reform that makes sure that the financial system doesn't go through what it went through again and, along the way, that you as a consumer aren't getting cheated when it comes to applying for a credit card or a mortgage.

Because of you, we passed laws that make sure that an equal day's pay is an equal day's work, because I don't want Sasha and Malia being treated second class. That's one of the reasons we put two women on the Supreme Court.

Because of you, we overturned "don't ask, don't tell," because we want everybody to be able to serve their country, regardless of who they love.

Because of you, we removed 100,000 troops from Iraq like we said we were going to do.

Audience member. Thank you!

The President. That's because of you.

Audience member. And you!

The President. Now we've got to protect the changes we've made, and we've got to keep on moving forward to get done the things we didn't get done. We've still got to get comprehensive immigration reform passed, because we can be a nation of law and a nation of immigrants.

We need to finally break the cycle of one energy crisis after another and start getting on the path of real—a real energy policy that frees ourselves from dependence on foreign oil and cleans up the planet in the process. We've got to leave America better than we found it, and we're not done yet.

So, New York, that's what this debate that we're having in Washington right now is about. Folks talk about budgets and numbers and deficits and debt. And the deficits and debt are serious, and we've got to do something about it. But this is also a debate about values. This is also a debate about what kind of country we believe in.

Yes, we believe in a Government that lives within its means. And I just want to remind people that when I walked into office, we had a trillion-dollar deficit. And some of the same folks who are now talking about deficits voted for two wars that weren't paid for, tax cuts that weren't paid for, a prescription drug policy that was not paid for. But that's somehow all forgotten now. [*Laughter*] A little amnesia there.

But it—but now this is our responsibility. We've got to be serious about cutting spending in Washington. We've got to make cuts in domestic spending, but we also have to make cuts in defense spending. We also have to make cuts in all the loopholes in our Tax Code. Those also have to be cut.

We've got to eliminate every dime of waste, and if we're serious about taking responsibility for the debt that we owe, then we're going to have to make some tough decisions. We've got to decide what we can afford to do without.

Audience member. Guantanamo!

The President. Case in point. And we've got to make sure that the burdens and the sacrifices of getting a handle on our debt and our deficit, that they're shared. But we also have to remind ourselves of the kind of America that we believe in, the kind of America that allowed us to live out our American Dream.

We're not going to pull up the ladder behind us. I'm not going to reduce our deficit by sacrificing the things that always made us great as a people. I'm not going to sacrifice investments in education. I'm not going to make scholarships harder to get and more expensive for young people. I'm not going to sacrifice the safety of our highways or our airports. I'm not going to sacrifice clean air and clean water. I'm not going to sacrifice clean energy at a time when we need to free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil and folks are getting killed at the pump. I'm not going to sacrifice America's future.

There's more than one way to mortgage America's future. We mortgage that future if

we don't get a handle on our deficit and debt, but we also mortgage it if we're not investing in those things that will assure the promise of the American Dream for the next generation.

And so part of this budget debate has to be about ending tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans in this country. I say that—[*applause*]—look, I say that not because I want to punish success. It's because if we're going to ask all Americans to sacrifice a little bit, we can't just say to millionaires and billionaires, you guys go ahead, don't worry about it. [*Laughter*] Just keep on counting your money. [*Laughter*]

I'm talking about myself. Look, I don't want a $200,000 tax cut that's paid for by asking 33 seniors each to pay $6,000 more in Medicare costs. I don't want that. I don't want a tax cut that's paid for by slashing Head Start slots for young people here in New York City or eliminating health insurance for millions of people currently on Medicaid, seniors in nursing homes and poor kids and families with children with autism or other disabilities. That's not a tradeoff I'm willing to make. That's not a tradeoff most Americans are willing to make. That's not who we are. We are better than that. That's what this debate is about. We're better than that.

What makes America great isn't just our skyscrapers. It's not our military might. It's not the size of our GDP. All those things are things that we are rightly proud of. But at our core, what makes us great is our character. We are individualists. We believe in free markets. We are entrepreneurs. We believe that each of us is endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights and liberties. We don't like folks telling us what to do. [*Laughter*] That's part of what makes us American.

But what also makes us American is the idea that we're all in this together, that I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper, and that when I look out for somebody else, I'm not doing it out of charity. If I'm driving through Harlem and I see a well-constructed school and young people that I know are being taught what they need to learn, my life is better. I know I'll be safer and I'll—and I know that as a country we'll be aligned. We'll be moving together forward, hand in hand, and this country will be less divided. My life will be better.

If I'm driving by Central Park and I see an elderly couple strolling, holding hand in hand, and I think to myself, you know, someday that's—Michelle and me, we're going to be strolling hand in hand, and I'll be able to take a walk in Central Park again, and nobody will recognize me and—[*laughter*]—but it makes me feel good to know that that couple, they've got Social Security, they've got Medicare, that they've got a sense of dignity and security in their golden years.

It's not charity. It makes my life better. No man is an island. We're not here by ourselves. That's our vision of America. It's not a vision of a small America. It's a vision of a big America that is compassionate and generous and bold and optimistic.

I don't want a cramped idea of America. I don't want an idea of America that says, no, we can't, and we can't afford to look after folks who need help, and we can't afford to make sure that the ladders of opportunity are available for the next generation, and our seniors have to fend for ourselves, and we can't afford to rebuild our infrastructure, and we can't afford to invest in science and basic research. That's not the America I know.

I want a confident America where, yes, everybody makes sacrifices, but nobody bears all the burden and we live up to the idea that no matter who we are, no matter what we look like, no matter whether our ancestors landed on Ellis Island or came here on a slave ship or crossed the Rio Grande, we are all connected to one another. We rise and fall together.

That's the idea at the heart of America. That's the idea at the heart of America. That's the idea at the heart of our campaign. That's why I'm running again. That's why I need your help more than ever. We are still at the early stages, but we've got to get out of the gate strong.

I know there are times where some of you felt frustrated, where we haven't gotten everything done that we wanted to get done. I know

you guys. [*Laughter*] Why did health care take so long? And we didn't get our public option—[*laughter*]—you know, it's like, you know, what are we doing about this energy thing? It's not happening fast enough. And look, small business—you know. [*Laughter*]

I know all of you—I've got a couple thousand political consultants here. [*Laughter*] And sometimes—oh, you know, how come Obama's not communicating properly? And it's like we're—they're—we're—and their narrative, and we have to—you know, I see your comments. [*Laughter*] And you look wistfully at the poster and—[*laughter*]—you remember that day in Iowa. [*Laughter*] I know. [*Laughter*] Then your friends come and talk to you and—oh, Obama's changed. He's—[*laughter*].

Audience member. I love you, Mr. President!

The President. But what I'm saying—we know this wasn't going to be easy, though. A journey like this one, we knew there were going to be setbacks and detours and times when we stumbled. People act like—sometimes, I read folks talking about how his campaign was so brilliant and so smooth. These people weren't on the campaign. [*Laughter*] I remember us screwing up all the time during the campaign. [*Laughter*]

But as is true in the campaign, so has it been true for America that each and every juncture in our history, when our future was on the line, when we hit that fork in the road, we came together. We solved our problems. We transformed ourselves from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy to an information economy. We absorbed new waves of immigrants. We made sure that we finally eradicated the stain of slavery and made sure that women were full participants in our democracy. We managed to move forward not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans, as one people and as one Nation.

So when you hear people saying, well, our problems are insoluble, when you confront the cynicism of others or sometimes your own, I just want you to think about all the progress we've already made. I want you to think about all of the business that we've got ahead of us. I want you to remember those words that summed up what we've been about and the commitment we made to each other: Yes, we can.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:49 p.m. at the Town Hall. In his remarks, he referred to talk show host Oprah Winfrey; and James A. Messina, manager, Obama 2012 reelection campaign. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 28.

Remarks Announcing National Security Team Personnel Changes
April 28, 2011

Tornado Damage in the Southeast

Everybody, please have a seat.

Good afternoon, everybody. I want to begin by saying a few words about the devastating storms that have ripped through the southeastern United States. The loss of life has been heartbreaking, especially in Alabama. In a matter of hours, these deadly tornadoes, some of the worst that we've seen in decades, took mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, friends and neighbors, even entire communities. Others are injured, and some are still missing, and in many places, the damage to homes and businesses is nothing short of catastrophic.

We can't control when or where a terrible storm may strike, but we can control how we respond to it. And I want every American who has been affected by this disaster to know that the Federal Government will do everything we can to help you recover. And we will stand with you as you rebuild.

I've already spoken to the Governors of Alabama, Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Georgia, and I've let them know that we are ready to help in any possible way.

I've declared a state of emergency in Alabama so that we can make all necessary resources available to that State. I've dispatched Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator Craig Fugate to Alabama so that he can personally work with State and local officials, and I will travel myself to Alabama tomorrow to meet with those leading the response efforts as well as the families who are reeling from this disaster.

I also want to commend all the men and women who have been working around the clock for the last few days to save the lives of their friends and neighbors and to begin the long work of rebuilding these communities. These police officers, firefighters, EMTs, and other emergency responders are heroes, and they have the thanks of a grateful nation. We pray for their success, and we stand with every American affected by this disaster in the days and weeks to come.

National Security Team Personnel Changes

Now, as we meet our obligations to these Americans, we're mindful of our obligation to the safety of all Americans, and that's why we're here today. As Commander in Chief, I have no greater responsibility than the security of the American people and the well-being of our courageous men and women in uniform and their families.

Over the past 2 years, my administration has done whatever it takes to meet these responsibilities. We've been relentless against Al Qaida and its affiliates, preventing terrorist attacks and saving lives. We brought nearly 100,000 troops out of Iraq in an orderly way. We ended our combat mission. And we refocused on Afghanistan, where we're breaking the Taliban's momentum and training Afghan forces. And from Europe to Asia, we've strengthened old alliances, forged new partnerships, and restored American leadership in the world.

Still, we confront urgent challenges. In Iraq, we're working to bring the rest of our troops home as Iraqis secure their democracy. In Afghanistan, we're moving into a new phase, transferring responsibility for security to Afghan forces, starting to reduce American forces this summer, and building a long-term partnership with the Afghan people.

As people across the Middle East and North Africa seek to determine their own destiny, we must ensure that America stands with those who seek their universal rights, and that includes continuing to support the international effort to protect the Libyan people. And here at home, as we make the hard decisions that are needed to reduce America's debt, we cannot compromise our ability to defend our Nation or our interests around the world.

These are some of the pressing challenges that we must meet in the pivotal days ahead, and today I am proud to announce key members of my national security team, who, along with Vice President Biden and Secretary Clinton, will help us meet them.

I've worked closely with most of the individuals on this stage, and all of them have my complete confidence. They are leaders of enormous integrity and talent, who've devoted their lives to keeping our Nation strong and secure. And I am personally very, very grateful to each of them for accepting these new assignments.

Given the pivotal period that we're entering, I felt that it was absolutely critical that we had this team in place so that we can stay focused on our missions, maintain our momentum, and keep our Nation secure.

When I took office, Bob Gates had already served under seven Presidents, and he carried a clock that counted down the days—[*laughter*]—hours and minutes until he could return to Washington State with his wife Becky. I was able to convince him to stay for 1 more year—or I was able to convince him to talk to Becky about staying 1 more year. [*Laughter*] At some point along the way, Bob threw out that clock. He is now one of the longest serving Defense Secretaries in American history. And as a grateful nation, we can all agree that Bob has more than earned the right to return to private life, which he has decided to do at the end of June.

I'll have more to say about Secretary Gates's exemplary service in the days to come, but today every American must know that because he helped to responsibly wind down the war in

Iraq, we're in a better position to support our troops and manage the transition in Afghanistan. Because he challenged conventional thinking, our troops have the lifesaving equipment they need and our military is better prepared for today's wars. And because he courageously cut unnecessary spending, we'll save hundreds of billions of dollars that can be invested in the 21st-century military that our troops deserve.

I am confident Bob Gates will be remembered as one of the finest Defense Secretaries in American history. And I will always be grateful for his service.

I'm equally confident that Bob's reform agenda will be carried out by another great public servant of our time, Leon Panetta. Leon appreciates the struggles and sacrifices of our troops and military families because he served in the Army himself and because he and his wife Sylvia are proud parents of a son who served in Afghanistan. And just as Leon earned the trust and respect of our intelligence professionals at the CIA by listening to them and fighting fiercely on their behalf, I know he'll do the same for our Armed Forces and their families.

The patriotism and extraordinary management skills that have defined Leon's four decades of service is exactly what we need in our next Secretary of Defense. As a former Congressman and White House Chief of Staff, Leon knows how to lead, which is why he is held in such high esteem not only in this city, but around the world. As a CIA Director who's played a decisive role in our fight against violent extremism, he understands that even as we begin the transition in Afghanistan, we must remain unwavering in our fight against Al Qaida. And as a former OMB Director, he'll ensure that even as we make tough budget decisions, we'll maintain our military superiority and keep our military the very best in the world.

Leon, I know that you've been looking forward to returning home to Sylvia and your beautiful Monterey, so I thank you for taking on yet another assignment for our country—and I hope you don't have a clock. [*Laughter*]

I'm also very pleased that Leon's work at the CIA will be carried on by one of our leading strategic thinkers and one of the finest military officers of our time, General David Petraeus. This is the second time in a year that I've asked General Petraeus to take on a demanding assignment. And I know this one carries a special sacrifice for him and his wife Holly. After nearly 40 years in uniform, including leading American and coalition forces in some of the most challenging military missions since 9/11, David Petraeus will retire from the Army that he loves to become the next CIA Director, effective early September, pending Senate confirmation.

As a lifelong consumer of intelligence, he knows that intelligence must be timely, accurate, and acted upon quickly. He understands that staying a step ahead of nimble adversaries requires sharing and coordinating information, including with my Director of National Intelligence, Jim Clapper.

And even as he and the CIA confront a full range of threats, David's extraordinary knowledge of the Middle East and Afghanistan uniquely positions him to lead the agency in its effort to defeat Al Qaida.

In short, just as General Petraeus changed the way that our military fights and wins wars in the 21st century, I have no doubt that Director Petraeus will guide our intelligence professionals as they continue to adapt and innovate in an ever-changing world.

Finally, I'm pleased to announce my choice for the civilian-military team that will lead our efforts in Afghanistan in this year of transition. I'm nominating a superb commander, Lieutenant General John Allen, to succeed General Petraeus as Commander of the International Security Assistance Force or ISAF.

As a battle-tested combat leader in Iraq, he helped turn the tide in Anbar Province. As deputy commander of Central Command, he's respected in the region and has been deeply involved in planning and executing our strategy in Afghanistan. As our troops continue to sacrifice for our security—as we tragically saw again yesterday—General Allen is the right commander for this vital mission.

As coalition forces transfer responsibility to Afghans, we're redoubling our efforts to promote political and economic progress in Afghanistan as well. Our tireless Ambassador, Karl Eikenberry, has helped us dramatically increase our civilian presence of diplomats and development experts. Never before have our civilians and troops worked together so closely and so successfully. And I've personally relied on Karl's candid advice on this incredibly complex mission.

After 2 years in one of the world's most challenging posts, Ambassador Eikenberry's time in Afghanistan is coming to an end. He's hard at work in Kabul today. And I want to thank Karl and his wife Ching for their outstanding service.

To build on Karl's great work, I'm very grateful that one of our Nation's most respected diplomats, Ryan Crocker, has agreed to return to public service as our next Ambassador to Afghanistan. This is a five-time Ambassador, and Ryan is no stranger to tough assignments. Few Americans know this region and its challenges better than Ambassador Crocker.

He was our first Envoy to Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban. He reopened our Embassy there. As a former Ambassador to Pakistan, he recognizes that our strategy has to succeed on both sides of the border. As Ambassador to Iraq, his remarkable partnership with David Petraeus helped to reduce the level of violence, promote reconciliation, and shift from the military surge to a political effort and a long-term partnership between our two countries.

This is exactly what is needed now in Afghanistan, where Ambassador Crocker will work with our new Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan, Marc Grossman. And I want to thank Ryan and his wife Christine—a decorated former Foreign Service officer herself—for agreeing to serve our Nation once more.

So Leon Panetta at the Defense Department, David Petraeus at the CIA, Ambassador Crocker and General John Allen in Afghanistan—these are the leaders that I've chosen to help guide us through the difficult days ahead. I will look to them and my entire national security team for their counsel, continuity, and unity of effort that this moment in history demands. And our people on the frontlines—our brave troops, our outstanding intelligence personnel, our dedicated diplomats—will look to them for the leadership that success requires.

I urge our friends in the Senate to confirm these individuals as swiftly as possible so they can assume their duties and help meet the urgent challenges we confront as a nation. We are a nation still at war. And joined by the leaders alongside me today, I will continue to do everything in my power as Commander in Chief to keep our Nation strong and the American people safe.

With that, I'd like to invite each of these leaders to say a few words. I'm actually going to start with Bob Gates.

[*At this point, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; Director of Central Intelligence Leon E. Panetta; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan; Lt. Gen. John R. Allen, USMC, deputy commander, U.S. Central Command; and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker each made brief remarks.*]

I cannot think of a group of individuals better suited to lead our national security team during this difficult time. While I'm up here, I think it's important to acknowledge the extraordinary work that my Vice President and my Secretary of State and my National Security Adviser have done as well. This is going to be an outstanding team. I'm grateful for the service that they've already provided, and I'm confident that they will continue to do everything that they can to ensure America's safety and security not just today, but tomorrow.

Let me also just briefly thank their teams, some of whom are going to be shuffling their own lives. Whether it's at the CIA or in Afghanistan, all of you have done outstanding work, and I'm grateful for your service to our Nation.

And once again, let me thank the families of the individuals here. All of them make extraordinary sacrifices. Michelle can attest to that. [*Laughter*] And we know that none of us

could be successful were it not for your extraordinary support. So thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:13 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Robert J. Bentley of Alabama; Gov. Robert F. McDonnell of Virginia; Gov. Haley R. Barbour of Mississippi; Gov. William E. Haslam of Tennessee; Gov. J. Nathan Deal of Georgia; and Lt. James Panetta, USN, son of Director of Central Intelligence Leon E. Panetta.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Ricardo Martinelli Berrocal of Panama

April 28, 2011

President Obama. Well, I want to welcome President Martinelli to the Oval Office, to the White House. As I think all of you know, the relationship between the United States and Panama is a historical relationship and a strong friendship that isn't just at the government level, but it is the person-to-person level.

Obviously, there are a lot of Panamanian Americans who live here. At the same time, President Martinelli was just informing me that 7 percent of the Panamanian population is from the United States. And so that constant contact between people, I think, is part of what has made us such strong friends and allies for generations.

Also, obviously, we share an interest in baseball. And if, Mr. President, you have somebody who's the next Mariano Rivera, make sure they go to the Chicago White Sox.

President Martinelli. The White Sox, not the Yankees. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Not the Yankees. They've had enough. In building on that friendship, we've discussed a wide range of issues in our meeting today. Obviously, one of the most important ones is how do we grow the economies of both countries. And in that regard, we are very pleased by the progress that we've made in moving forward a U.S.-Panamanian free trade agreement.

Thanks to the leadership of President Martinelli, there have been a range of significant reforms in banking and taxation in Panama. And we are confident now that a free trade agreement would be good for our country, would create jobs here in the United States, open up new markets with potential for billions of dollars of cross-border trade. We think it would be also very good for Panama and allow additional economic exchanges between our two countries.

So my expectation is, is that as part of a broader trade package that we're going to be presenting to Congress, that we're going to be able to get this done. And I want to thank again President Martinelli for his leadership on this issue.

We also discussed security in the region. We have had very close cooperation between our two governments on issues of drug interdiction and dealing with the constant problem of the drug trade in Central America. And Panama has been one of the leaders that we've worked with in trying to roll back the incursion of the drug cartels into the region.

I know President Martinelli is greatly committed to this issue, and we discussed how we could cooperate together not only in the interdiction side, but also in helping other countries in the region to build up their capacity. And we think that Panama is going to be critical to the Central American Security Partnership that I've announced previously.

We also discussed some of the broader issues related to the region. We both agreed that the more we can do to showcase the success of free markets, commitments to democracy, human rights, individual liberties, freedom of the press, the more that we are highlighting those shared values between our two countries, the more successful the people of the region will be.

And so again, I just want to say to President Martinelli, thank you for your visit. Thank you for your friendship. Thank you for your leadership. The American people know that we have

a great friend in the people of Panama, and we hope that the people of Panama know that they have a great friend in the United States of America.

President Martinelli. Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you so much. Thank you.

President Martinelli. Well, thank you very much. Thank you, President Obama. This has been a very fruitful meeting for Panama and the United States.

As you all know, we—Panama has completed all the necessary steps in order to have a free trade agreement with the U.S. This new agreement will bring jobs for both countries. It will meet—it will also bring growth for the United States and for Panama.

The United States is Panama's main and biggest ally, and we have always looked to the United States as our main supplier of many goods and services.

At the same time, we also spoke about the security issues. And Panama, as you all know, is the first frontier to the—in Central America to the drug-producing countries. And being Panama successful makes a U.S. much safer in crime and drugs in all the cities of the United States. The more drugs that we catch, the less amount of drugs that will come to the United States.

We have a—we are going to work very closely with the United States in—on security and on commerce, because this is the only way that we can expand growth in both of our economies, expand trade, expand jobs. And at the same time, this will bring better quality of life to the citizens—all the citizens of the U.S. and of Panama.

President Obama. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

President Martinelli. Mr. President, thank you very much.

President Obama. Thank you. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:26 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mariano Rivera, pitcher, Major League Baseball's New York Yankees.

Statement on United States District Court Approval of the Settlement in the *Keepseagle* Class-Action Lawsuit on Discrimination by the Department of Agriculture

April 28, 2011

Today the U.S. District Court approved the settlement reached by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Justice with the plaintiffs in the *Keepseagle* class-action lawsuit. This is yet another important step forward in addressing an unfortunate chapter in USDA's civil rights history.

This settlement would not have been reached without the leadership of Secretary Vilsack and Attorney General Holder, and I want to thank them both for their hard work on behalf of Native American farmers. Today's approval of the settlement will help strengthen our nation-to-nation relationship with Indian Country and reinforce the idea that all citizens have a right to be treated fairly by their Government.

Remarks Following a Tour of Tornado Damage in Tuscaloosa, Alabama

April 29, 2011

The President. Well, Michelle and I want to express, first of all, our deepest condolences to not just the city of Tuscaloosa, but the State of Alabama and all the other States that have been affected by this unbelievable storm. We just took a tour, and I've got to say, I've never seen devastation like this. It is heartbreaking. We were just talking to some residents here

who were lucky enough to escape alive, but have lost everything. They mentioned that their neighbors had lost two of their grandchildren in the process.

What you're seeing here is the consequence of just a few minutes of this extraordinarily powerful storm sweeping through this community. And as the Governor was mentioning, Tuscaloosa typically gets a tornado during the season, but this is something that I don't think anybody has seen before.

In addition to keeping all the families who've been affected in our thoughts and prayers, obviously our biggest priority now is to help this community recover. I want to thank Mayor Maddox for his extraordinary leadership. Chief Burgess, I know, is having to deal with a lot of difficulties. One of the challenges that the mayor was explaining is, is that the assets of the city—a fire station that we passed on the way in, police resources, emergency resources—those too have been affected.

Fortunately, the Governor has done an extraordinary job with his team in making sure that the resources of the State are mobilized and have been brought in here. I'm very pleased that we've got a FEMA Director in Craig Fugate who is as experienced as anybody in responding to disasters even of this magnitude. And we've already provided the disaster designations that are required to make sure that the maximum Federal help comes here as quickly as possible.

Craig is working with the teams on the ground to make sure that we are seamlessly coordinating between the State, local, and Federal governments. And I want to just make a commitment to the communities here that we are going to do everything we can to help these communities rebuild.

We can't bring those who have been lost back. They're alongside God at this point. We can help, maybe a little bit, with the families dealing with the grief of having a loved one lost. But the property damage, which is obviously extensive, that's something that we can do something about.

And so we're going to do everything we can to partner with you, Mr. Mayor, with you, Governor. As the Governor was pointing out, this community was hit as bad as any place, but there are communities all across Alabama and all across this region that have been affected, and we're going to be making that same commitment to make sure that we're doing whatever we can to make sure that people are okay.

[*At this point, Governor Robert J. Bentley of Alabama waved away a wasp flying around the President.*]

That bee likes you. [*Laughter*]

Gov. Bentley. [*Inaudible*]—that's a wasp.

The President. It's a—okay.

Gov. Bentley. Well, now, you stand still.

The President. Okay, you got it. There you go.

Gov. Bentley. I got him. I got him. I got him off of you.

Sen. Richard C. Shelby. No, he got him away. He ran him away. You didn't get him.

Audience member. Where's the Secret Service when you need them? [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes, exactly. [*Laughter*] Finally, let me just say this. As you walk around, we were just talking to three young people over there, college students here at the University of Alabama who are volunteering now to help clean up. One of the young ladies there, she actually lived in this apartment, wasn't here at the time the storm happened.

What you're struck by is people's resilience and the way that the community has come together. And obviously, that's testimony to the leadership of the Governor and the mayor, but it's also inherent as part of the American spirit. We go through hard times, but no matter how hard we may be tested, we maintain our faith and we look to each other to make sure that we're supporting each other and helping each other. I'm sure that that spirit is going to continue until this city is all the way back.

So, Mr. Mayor—he was pointing out that there's a lot of national media down here now, and the mayor expressed the concern that perhaps the media will move on in a day or a week or a month and that folks will forget what's happened here. And I want to assure him that the American people all across the country are with him and his community, and we're going

to make sure that you're not forgotten and that we do everything we can to make sure that we rebuild.

So with that, Governor, would you like to say a few words?

Gov. Bentley. I would. And, Mr. President, I would like to personally thank you and Mrs. Obama for coming and visiting Alabama because you know as you fly over this—and I did yesterday—as you fly over it from the air, it does not do it justice until you're here on the ground. And I just want you to know how much I appreciate that.

We asked for—we've mobilized the State. We declared a state of emergency early on, even before the first tornadoes hit, and then we mobilized our National Guard the first day. We then asked the President for aid, and we asked him to expedite that, and they have done that. And I just want you to know how much I appreciate that, Mr. President, because all these people appreciate that so much.

We have eight counties across the State that have been hit by major tornadoes. This probably is the worst one, but we have others. As you go across the State, you see the same evidence of tornadoes all across the State.

And so there are people that are hurting. We have now 210 confirmed deaths in Alabama. We have 1,700 injured. We have a number of people missing at the present time. We're going to continue to work in a rescue-type mode, but we're now more in a recovery mode.

[*The President waved away a wasp flying around Gov. Bentley.*]

Thank you, Mr. President. [*Laughter*] If you'll keep him off of me——

The President. I'm going to keep my eye on you. We're looking out for each other. That's——

Gov. Bentley. I appreciate that. Yes, sir. Yes, sir. [*Laughter*]

But I am—let me say I am so proud of our first-responders in this State. They have done an outstanding job. Our mayors, our county commissioners, our police, our firemen, they have all just done such a fantastic job. Our EMA people, they have just—we have got a great team. They've all worked together. And now we have the Federal Government helping us. And you know, that just shows that when locals and State and Federal Government works together, we can get things accomplished, and that's what we're going to do.

And so, Mr. President, welcome to Alabama, but not under these circumstances. We want you to come back and maybe go to a football game over here at a later day and when things are better. But thank you for your help.

The President. I will gladly, gladly come back.

Gov. Bentley. Thank you, sir.

The President. Mr. Mayor, if you'd like to say a few words.

Mayor Walter Maddox of Tuscaloosa. Mr. President, Governor, Mrs. Obama, thank you for coming today. The last 36 hours have been probably the most trying time in this community's history. But you're going to see a new story being written here in Tuscaloosa. And in the years to come these chapters are going to be fueled with hope and opportunity.

Since this tragedy began, I've been using Romans 12:12 when Paul wrote under persecution, "Rejoice in our confident hope." Well, today, Mr. President, your visit here has brought a confident hope to this community. And in the days, weeks, and months to come, we're going to be a story that you're going to be very proud of and you can talk about across this land.

Thank you again for coming today.

The President. Well, thank you for your leadership. And two last points I want to make. First of all, we've got our congressional delegation here, and I am absolutely confident that they will make sure that the resources are available to help rebuild.

To all the local officials who are here, I know that they've been personally affected, but I know that they're going to provide the leadership in this community, working with the mayor and the Governor to do what is needed.

And finally, I think the mayor said something very profound as we were driving over here. He said, what's amazing is when something like this happens, folks forget all their petty differences. Politics, differences of religion or race,

all that fades away when we are confronted with the awesome power of nature. And we're reminded that all we have is each other.

And so, hopefully, that spirit continues and grows. If nothing else comes out of this tragedy, let's hope that that's one of the things that comes out.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Kevin Burgess, battalion chief, Tuscaloosa Fire and Rescue Service; and Derek Johns and Ellery Schnell, students, University of Alabama.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Executive Order Blocking Property of Certain Persons With Respect to Human Rights Abuses in Syria
April 29, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that expands the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, and Executive Order 13460 of February 13, 2008.

In Executive Order 13338, the President found that the actions of the Government of Syria constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and declared a national emergency to deal with that threat. To address that threat and to implement the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–175), the President in Executive Order 13338 blocked the property of certain persons and imposed additional prohibitions on certain transactions with respect to Syria.

I have determined that the Government of Syria's human rights abuses, including those related to the repression of the people in Syria, manifested most recently by the use of violence and torture against, and arbitrary arrests and detentions of, peaceful protestors by police, security forces, and other entities that have engaged in human rights abuses, constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, and warrant the imposition of additional sanctions.

The order blocks the property and interests in property of persons listed in the Annex to the order. The order also provides criteria for designations of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to be responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, or to have participated in, the commission of human rights abuses in Syria, including those related to repression;
- to be a senior official of an entity whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;
- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, human rights abuses in Syria, or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to Executive Order 13338, Executive Order 13460, or the order; or
- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to Executive Order 13460 or the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the

President by IEEPA, as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. I have also delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the authority to determine that circumstances no longer warrant the blocking of the property and interests in property of a person listed in the Annex to the order, and to take necessary action to give effect to that determination.

The order was effective at 1:00 p.m. eastern daylight time on April 29, 2011. All executive agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Actions of the Government of Syria
April 29, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the actions of the Government of Syria declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, and Executive Order 13460 of February 13, 2008, is to continue in effect beyond May 11, 2011.

The Syrian government has reduced the number of foreign fighters bound for Iraq—although the fighters have still created serious problems there—but its actions and policies, including continuing support for terrorist organizations, damaging the Lebanese government's ability to function, and pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect the national emergency declared with respect to this threat and to maintain in force the sanctions to address this national emergency. In addition, the United States condemns the use of violence against peacefully demonstrating citizens in Syria, and calls on the Syrian government to respect human rights and to forge a credible path to a future of greater freedom, democracy, opportunity, and justice. As we have communicated to the Syrian government directly, the United States will consider changes in the policies and actions of the Government of Syria in determining whether to continue or terminate this national emergency in the future.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Commencement Address at Miami Dade College in Miami, Florida
April 29, 2011

The President. Thank you, Miami Dade! Thank you. Please, everyone, be seated.

Hafeeza, thank you for that wonderful introduction. To Dr. Padron, Dr. Vicente, to the board of trustees, the faculty, parents, family, friends, and most important, the class of 2011: Congratulations! Congratulations on reaching this day, and thank you for allowing me the profound honor of being a part of it.

And thank you for my first honorary associate degree. [*Laughter*] You know, one of the perks of this job is that degrees come free these days. [*Laughter*] Not that it impresses anybody at home. Now Michelle just says, "Hey, Doctor, go take that dog for a walk." [*Laughter*]

It is such a thrill to be at one of the largest, most diverse institutions of higher learning in America, one that just this week was named one of the top community colleges in the Nation. More than 170,000 students study across your 8 campuses. You come from 181 countries, represented by the flags that just marched across this stage. You speak 94 languages. About 90 percent of you are minorities. And because more than 90 percent of you find a job in your field of study, it's fitting that your motto is "Opportunity changes everything."

As someone who's only here because of the chances my education gave me, I couldn't agree more. Opportunity changes everything. America will only be as strong in this new century as the opportunities that we provide you, the opportunities that we provide all our young people—Latino, Black, White, Asian, Native American, everybody. America will only be as strong as our pursuit of scientific research and our leadership in technology and innovation. And I believe that community colleges like this one are critical pathways to the middle class that equip students with the skills and the education necessary to compete and win in this 21st-century economy. And that's why I've made community colleges a centerpiece of my education agenda, along with helping more students afford college. I couldn't be prouder of the work we've done in community colleges. And your accomplishment today is vital to America reclaiming the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020. So I am proud of you. I am proud of you.

I know that for many of you, reaching this day wasn't easy.

Audience members. No.

The President. See? I got some amens out there.

Perhaps you're the first in your family to go to college. Some of you have had to overcome big obstacles, defeat your own doubts, prove yourself to everyone who ever believed that you couldn't make it because of what you look like or where you came from. And of course, for so many of you, this day represents the fulfillment of your family's dreams when you were born. This is their achievement as well, so give it up for your parents and your grandparents, your cousins and your uncles and your aunties. This is their day too. This is their day too.

See, the diploma you're about to receive stands for something more than the investment you made in yourselves. It's the result of an investment made by generations before you, an investment in that radical yet simple idea that America is a place—the place—where you can make it if you try. That's the ideal that has made this country; that's the idea that's represented by that one flag that all of you cheered for. That's what has made us a shining light to the world.

And preserving this idea, keeping the American Dream alive from one generation to the next—that's never been an easy task. It's an even greater test in times of rapid change. And all of you are graduating at a moment when change is coming faster than ever before. We're emerging from an economic downturn like we haven't seen since the 1930s. Massive shifts in technology have shifted profoundly what our economy looks like. Massive shifts abroad geopolitically have swift and dramatic impacts not only overseas, but also here at home, from markets on Wall Street to wallets

on Main Street. Just as advances in technology have the power to make our lives better, they also force us to compete with other nations like never before. Tackling big challenges like terrorism and climate change require sustained national effort, and yet too often, our politics seems as broken, as divided as ever.

So I know that for many of you, it's an intimidating time to be marching out into the world. Everything seems so unsettled. The future may seem unclear. But as you make your way in this ever-changing world, you should take comfort in knowing that as a country, we've navigated tougher times before. We've sailed stormier seas. You know, earlier today, I spent some time in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. And some of you have seen what happened there as a consequence of the tornadoes that struck. Now, the mayor and I visited a community where the devastation from this storm was simply heartbreaking—entire homes and blocks just gone, wiped away. Some families lost everything. Some families lost family.

But what was striking is the way that damaged community has come together, how they've rallied around one another. The mayor there, young man doing wonderful work, Mayor Maddox, he put it best. He told me that when disasters like this strike, all our grievances seem to go away. All our differences don't seem to matter. All our political disagreements seem so petty. We help each other, we support one another, as one country, as one people.

That's the American spirit. No matter how hard we are tested, we look to our faith and our faith in one another. No matter what the challenge, we've always carried the American Dream forward. That's been true throughout our history.

When bombs fell on Pearl Harbor, when an Iron Curtain fell over Europe, when the threat of nuclear war loomed just 90 miles from this city, when a brilliant September morning was darkened by terror, in none of those instances did we falter. We endured. We carried the dream forward.

We've gone through periods of great economic turmoil, from an economy where most people worked on farms to one where most people worked in factories, to now one fueled by information and technology. Through it all, we've persevered, we've adapted, we've prospered. Workers found their voice and the right to organize for fair wages and safe working conditions. We carried forward.

When waves of Irish and Italian immigrants were derided as criminals and outcasts, when Catholics were discriminated against or Jews had to succumb to quotas or Muslims were blamed for society's ills, when Blacks were treated as second-class citizens and marriages like my own parents' were illegal in much of the country, we didn't stop. We didn't accept inequality. We fought. We overcame. We carried the dream forward.

We have carried this dream forward through times when our politics seemed broken. This is not the first time where it looked like politicians were going crazy. [*Laughter*] In heated debates over our founding, some warned independence would doom America to "a scene of bloody discord and desolation for ages." That was the warning about independence. One of our greatest Presidents, Thomas Jefferson, was labeled an "infidel" and a "howling atheist" with "fangs." Think about that. Even I haven't gotten that one yet. [*Laughter*] Lincoln, FDR, they were both vilified in their own times as tyrants, power hungry, bent on destroying democracy. And of course, this State has seen its fair share of tightly contested elections. [*Laughter*]

And we've made it through those moments. None of it was easy. A lot of it was messy. Sometimes there was violence. Sometimes it took years, even decades, for us to find our way through. But here's the thing: We made it through. We made it through because in each of those moments, we made a choice.

Rather than turn inward and wall off America from the rest of the world, we've chosen to stand up forcefully for the ideals and the rights we believe are universal for all men and women.

Rather than settle for an America where everybody is left to fend for themselves, where we think only about our own short-term needs instead of the country that we're leaving to our children, we have chosen to build a nation

where everybody has a shot at opportunity, where everyone can succeed. We've chosen to invest in our people and in their future, building public schools, sending a generation to college on the GI bill, laying highways and railroads, building ports all across the country.

Rather than turn on each other in times of cultural upheaval, we've chosen to march, to organize, to sit in, to turn out, to petition our Government for women's rights and voting rights and civil rights, even in the face of fierce resistance, because we are Americans, and no matter who we are or what we look like, we believe that in this country, all are equal, all are free.

Rather than give in to the voices suggesting we set our sights lower, downsize our dreams, or settle for something less, we've chosen again and again to make America bigger, bolder, more diverse, more generous, more hopeful.

Because throughout our history, what has distinguished us from all other nations is not just our wealth, it's not just our power. It's been our deep commitment to individual freedom and personal responsibility, but also our unshakeable commitment to one another, a recognition that we share a future, that we rise or fall together, that we are part of a common enterprise that is greater, somehow, than the sum of its parts.

So yes, class of 2011, change will be a constant in your lives. And that can be scary. That can be hard. And sometimes, you'll be tempted to turn inward, to say, "What's good enough for me is good enough." Sometimes, you'll be tempted to turn on one another, to say, "My problems are the fault of those who don't look like me or sound like me." Sometimes, you'll be tempted to give in to those voices that warn: "Too hard. Don't try. No, you can't."

But I have faith you will reject those voices. I have faith you will reject those impulses. Your generation was born into a world with fewer walls, a world educated in an era of information, tempered by war and economic turmoil. And as our globe has grown smaller and more connected, you've shed the heavy weights of earlier generations. Your generation has grown up more accepting and tolerant of people for who they are, regardless of race or gender or religious belief, regardless of creed or sexual orientation. That's how you've grown up. You see our diversity as a strength, not a weakness. And I believe those life experiences have fortified you, as earlier generations were fortified, to meet the tests of our time. Everything I have seen of your generation has shown me that you believe as deeply as any previous generation that America can always change for the better.

Class of 2011, you and your generation are now responsible for our future. I'm only going to be President a little bit longer. You are going to be leaders for many years to come. You will have to make choices to keep our dream alive for the next generation, choices about whether we'll stack the deck against workers and the middle class or whether we make sure America remains a place where if you work hard, you can get ahead. You're going to have to make a choice about whether we'll say we can't afford to educate our young people and send them to college or whether we continue to be a country that makes investments that are necessary to keep those young people competitive in this new century. It will be up to you to choose whether we'll remain vulnerable to swings in oil prices or whether we invest in the clean energy that can break our dependence on oil and protect our planet. It will be your choice as to whether we break our promise to seniors and the poor and the disabled and tell them to fend for themselves or whether we keep strengthening our social safety net and our health care system.

And it will be up to you whether we'll turn on one another or whether we stay true to our values of fairness and opportunity, understanding that we are a nation of immigrants, immigrants that built this country into an economic powerhouse and a beacon of hope around the world.

I know this last issue generates some passion. I know that several young people here have recently identified themselves as undocumented. Some were brought here as young children and discovered the truth only as adults. And they've put their futures on the

line in hopes it will spur the rest of us to live up to our most cherished values.

I strongly believe we should fix our broken immigration system, fix it so that it meets our 21st-century economic and security needs. And I want to work with Democrats and Republicans, yes, to protect our borders and enforce our laws and address the status of millions of undocumented workers. And I will keep fighting alongside many of you to make the "DREAM Act" the law of the land.

Like all of this country's movements towards justice, it will be difficult and it will take time. I know some here wish that I could just bypass Congress and change the law myself. But that's not how democracy works. See, democracy is hard. But it's right.

Changing our laws means doing the hard work of changing minds and changing votes, one by one. And I am convinced we can change the laws, because we should all be able to agree that it makes no sense to expel talented young people from our country. They grew up as Americans. They pledge allegiance to our flag. And if they are trying to serve in our military or earn a degree, they are contributing to our future, and we welcome those contributions.

We didn't raise the Statue of Liberty with its back to the world, we raised it with its light to the world. Whether your ancestors came here on the *Mayflower* or a slave ship, whether they signed in at Ellis Island or they crossed the Rio Grande, we are one people. We need one another. Our patriotism is not rooted in ethnicity, but in a shared belief of the enduring and permanent promise of this country.

That's the promise redeemed by your graduation today. That's the promise that drew so many of you to this college and your parents to this country. And that's the promise that drew my own father here.

I didn't know him well, my father, and he lived a troubled life. But I know that when he was around your age, he dreamed of something more than his lot in life. He dreamed of that magical place; he dreamed of coming to study in America.

And when I was around your age, I traveled back to his home country of Kenya for the first time to learn his story. And I went to a tiny village called Alego, where his stepmother still lives in the house where he grew up, and I visited his grave. And I asked her if there was anything left for me to know him by. And she opened a trunk, and she took out a stack of letters. This is a elderly woman who doesn't read or write, but she had saved these letters, more than 30 of them, written in his hand and addressed to colleges and universities all across America.

They weren't that different from the letters that I wrote when I was trying to get into college or the ones that you wrote when you were hoping to come here. They were written in the simple, sometimes awkward, sometimes grammatically incorrect, unmistakably hopeful voice of somebody who is just desperate for a chance, just desperate to live his unlikely dream.

And somebody at the University of Hawaii, halfway around the world, chose to gave him that chance. And because that person gave a young man a chance, he met a young woman from Kansas; they had a son in the land where all things are possible.

And one of my earliest memories from growing up in Hawaii is of sitting on my grandfather's shoulders to see the astronauts from one of the Apollo space missions come ashore after a successful splashdown. You remember that no matter how young you are as a child. It's one of those unforgettable moments when you first realize the miracle that is what this country is capable of. And I remember waving a little American flag on top of my grandfather's shoulders, thinking about those astronauts and thinking about space.

And today, on this day, more than 40 years later, I took my daughters to the Kennedy Space Center. And even though we didn't get to see the Space Shuttle *Endeavour* launch, we met some of the astronauts, and we toured the Space Shuttle *Atlantis*. And looking at my daughters, I thought of how things come full circle. I thought of all that we've achieved as a nation since I was their age, a little Brown boy sitting on my grandfather's shoulders, and I

thought about all I want us to achieve by the time they have children of their own.

That's my proof that the idea of America endures. That's my evidence that our brave endeavor on this Earth continues. And every single day I walk into the Oval Office, and for all the days of my life, I will always remember that in no other nation on Earth could my story be possible, could your stories be possible. That is something I celebrate. That is something that drives every decision I make.

So what I ask of you, graduates, as you walk out of here today is this: Pursue success. Do not falter. When you make it, pull somebody else up. Preserve our dream. Remember your life is richer when people around you have a shot at opportunity as well. Strive to widen that circle of possibility. Strive to forge that big, generous, optimistic vision of America that we inherited. Strive to carry that dream forward to future generations.

Thank you. Congratulations. May God bless you. May God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:17 p.m. at the James L. Knight International Center. In his remarks, he referred to Hafeeza Rahman, president, Student Government Association, Miami Dade College North Campus; Eduardo J. Padron, president, Miami Dade College; Jose A. Vicente, president, Miami Dade College North Campus and Miami Dade College West; Mayor Walter Maddox of Tuscaloosa, AL; and Sarah Onyango Obama, stepmother of the President's father.

The President's Weekly Address
April 30, 2011

After the worst recession since the Great Depression, our economy is growing again, and we've gained almost 2 million private sector jobs over the last 13 months. But I also know that a lot of folks aren't feeling as positive as some of those statistics might suggest. It's still too hard to find a job. And even if you have a job, chances are, you're having a tougher time paying the rising costs of everything from groceries to gas. In some places, gas is now more than four bucks a gallon, meaning that you could be paying upwards of 50 or 60 dollars to fill up your tank.

Of course, while rising gas prices mean real pain for our families at the pump, they also mean bigger profits for oil companies. This week, the largest oil companies announced that they'd made more than $25 billion in the first few months of 2011, up about 30 percent from last year.

Now, I don't have any problem with any company or industry being rewarded for their success. The incentive of healthy profits is what fuels entrepreneurialism and helps drive our economy forward. But I do have a problem with unwarranted taxpayer subsidies that we've been handing out to oil and gas companies to the tune of $4 billion a year. When oil companies are making huge profits already and you're struggling at the pump and we're scouring the Federal budget for spending we can afford to do without, these tax giveaways aren't right, they aren't smart, and we need to end them.

That's why earlier this week, I renewed my call to Congress to stop subsidizing the oil and gas industries. Understand, I'm not opposed to producing oil. I believe that if we're serious about meeting our energy challenge, we need to operate on all cylinders, and that means pursuing a broad range of energy policies, including safe and responsible oil production here at home. In fact, last year, America's oil production reached its highest level since 2003.

But I also believe that instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy, we should invest in tomorrow's. And that's what we've been doing. Already, we've seen how the investments we're making in clean energy can lead to new jobs and new businesses. I've seen some of them myself: small businesses that are making the most of solar and wind power and energy-efficient technologies, big companies that are making fuel-efficient cars and trucks part of their vehicle fleets. And to promote these

kinds of vehicles, we implemented historic new fuel economy standards, which could save you as much as $3,000 at the pump.

Now, I know that in this tough fiscal environment, it's tempting for some in Washington to want to cut our investments in clean energy. And I absolutely agree that the only way we'll be able to afford the things we need is if we cut the things we don't and live within our means. But I refuse to cut things like clean energy that will help America win the future by growing our economy and creating good-paying jobs, that will help make America more secure, and that will help clean up our planet in the process. An investment in clean energy today is an investment in a better tomorrow, and I think that's an investment worth making.

Thanks for listening, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 6:45 p.m. on April 28 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on April 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 29, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 30.

Remarks at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner
April 30, 2011

All right, everybody, please have a seat.

My fellow Americans—[*laughter*]—mahalo! [*Laughter*] It is wonderful to be here at the White House Correspondents' dinner. What a week. As some of you heard, the State of Hawaii released my official, long-form birth certificate.

Hopefully, this puts all doubts to rest. But just in case there are any lingering questions, tonight I'm prepared to go a step further. Tonight, for the first time, I am releasing my official birth video. [*Laughter*]

Now, I warn you. [*Laughter*] No one has seen this footage in 50 years, not even me. But let's take a look.

[*At this point, a video featuring clips of Disney's "The Lion King" was shown.*]

Oh, well. Back to square one. I want to make clear to the FOX News table: That was a joke. [*Laughter*] That was not my real birth video. That was a children's cartoon. Call Disney if you don't believe me. [*Laughter*] They have the original long-form version.

Anyway, it's good to be back with so many esteemed guests: celebrities, Senators, journalists, essential Government employees—[*laughter*]—nonessential Government employees. You know who you are. [*Laughter*]

I am very much looking forward to hearing Seth Meyers tonight. He's a young, fresh face who can do no wrong in the eyes of his fans. Seth, enjoy it while it lasts. [*Laughter*]

Yes, I think it is fair to say that when it comes to my Presidency, the honeymoon is over. [*Laughter*] For example, some people now suggest that I'm too professorial. And I'd like to address that head on, by assigning all of you some reading that will help you draw your own conclusions. [*Laughter*] Others say that I'm arrogant. But I've found a really great self-help tool for this: my poll numbers.

I've even let down my key core constituency: movie stars. Just the other day, Matt Damon—I love Matt Damon, love the guy—Matt Damon said he was disappointed in my performance. Well, Matt, I just saw "The Adjustment Bureau," so—[*laughter*]—right back at you, buddy. [*Laughter*]

Of course, there's someone who I can always count on for support, my wonderful wife Michelle. We made a terrific team at the Easter egg roll this week. I'd give out bags of candy to the kids, and she'd snatch them right back out of their little hands—[*laughter*]—snatched them. [*Laughter*]

And where is the National Public Radio table? [*Applause*] You guys are still here? [*Laughter*] That's good. I couldn't remember where we landed on that. [*Laughter*] Now, I know you were a little tense when the GOP tried to cut your funding, but personally, I was

looking forward to new programming like "No Things Considered"—[*laughter*]—or "Wait, Wait . . . Don't Fund Me!" [*Laughter*]

Of course, the deficit is a serious issue. That's why Paul Ryan couldn't be here tonight. His budget has no room for laughter. [*Laughter*]

Michele Bachmann is here, though, I understand, and she is thinking about running for President, which is weird because I hear she was born in Canada. [*Laughter*] Yes, Michele, this is how it starts. [*Laughter*] Just letting you know. [*Laughter*]

Tim Pawlenty—he seems all-American, but have you heard his real middle name, Tim "Hosni" Pawlenty? [*Laughter*] What a shame. [*Laughter*]

My buddy, our outstanding Ambassador, Jon Huntsman, is with us. Now, there's something you might not know about Jon. He didn't learn to speak Chinese to go there. Oh, no. He learned English to come here. [*Laughter*]

And then there's a vicious rumor floating around that I think could really hurt Mitt Romney. I heard he passed universal health care when he was Governor of Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] Someone should get to the bottom of that.

And I know just the guy to do it; Donald Trump is here tonight! [*Laughter*] Now, I know that he's taken some flak lately, but no one is happier, no one is prouder to put this birth certificate matter to rest than the Donald. [*Laughter*] And that's because he can finally get back to focusing on the issues that matter, like, did we fake the Moon landing? What really happened in Roswell? [*Laughter*] And where are Biggie and Tupac? [*Laughter*]

But all kidding aside, obviously, we all know about your credentials and breadth of experience. [*Laughter*] For example—no, seriously, just recently, in an episode of "Celebrity Apprentice"—[*laughter*]—at the steakhouse, the men's cooking team did not impress the judges from Omaha Steaks. And there was a lot of blame to go around. But you, Mr. Trump, recognized that the real problem was a lack of leadership. And so ultimately, you didn't blame Lil Jon or Meat Loaf—[*laughter*]—you fired Gary Busey. [*Laughter*] And these are the kind of decisions that would keep me up at night. Well handled, sir. [*Laughter*] Well handled.

Say what you will about Mr. Trump, he certainly would bring some change to the White House. Let's see what we've got up there. [*Laughter*]

[*An image of the White House with a sign reading "Trump White House Resort and Casino" was shown.*]

So yes, this has been quite a year in politics, but also in the movies. Many people, for instance, were inspired by "The King's Speech." It's a wonderful film. Well, some of you may not know this, but there's now a sequel in the works that touches close to home. And because this is a Hollywood crowd, tonight I can offer a sneak peek. So can we show the trailer, please?

[*A parody video was shown.*]

Coming to a theater near you.

Let me close on a serious note. We are having a good time, but as has been true for the last several years, we have incredible young men and women who are serving in uniform overseas in the most extraordinary of circumstances. And we are reminded of their courage and their valor.

We also need to remember our neighbors in Alabama and across the South that have been devastated by terrible storms from last week. Michelle and I were down there yesterday, and we've spent a lot of time with some of the folks who have been affected. The devastation is unimaginable and is heartbreaking, and it's going to be a long road back. And so we need to keep those Americans in our thoughts and in our prayers. But we also need to stand with them in the hard months and perhaps years to come.

I intend to make sure that the Federal Government does that. And I've got faith that the journalists in this room will do their part for the people who have been affected by this disaster, by reporting on their progress and letting the rest of America know when they will need more help. Those are stories that need telling. And that's what all of you do best, whether it's rushing to the site of a devastating

storm in Alabama or braving danger to cover a revolution in the Middle East.

You know, in the last months, we've seen journalists threatened, arrested, beaten, attacked, and in some cases even killed simply for doing their best to bring us the story, to give people a voice, and to hold leaders accountable. And through it all, we've seen daring men and women risk their lives for the simple idea that no one should be silenced and everyone deserves to know the truth.

That's what you do. At your best, that's what journalism is. That's the principle that you uphold. It is always important, but it's especially important in times of challenge, like the moment that America and the world is facing now.

So I thank you for your service and the contributions that you make. And I want to close by recognizing not only your service, but also to remember those that have been lost as a consequence of the extraordinary reporting that they've done over recent weeks. They help, too, to defend our freedoms and allow democracy to flourish.

God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 p.m. at the Washington Hilton hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Timothy J. Pawlenty of Minnesota; former U.S. Ambassador to China Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.; former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; Donald J. Trump, chairman and chief executive officer, Trump Organization; actors Seth A. Meyers, Matthew P. Damon, and W. Gary Busey; and musicians Jonathan "Lil Jon" Smith and Marvin L. "Meat Loaf" Aday. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 1.

Remarks on the Death of Al Qaida Terrorist Organization Leader Usama bin Laden

May 1, 2011

Good evening. Tonight I can report to the American people and to the world that the United States has conducted an operation that killed Usama bin Laden, the leader of Al Qaida and a terrorist who's responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children.

It was nearly 10 years ago that a bright September day was darkened by the worst attack on the American people in our history. The images of 9/11 are seared into our national memory: hijacked planes cutting through a cloudless September sky; the Twin Towers collapsing to the ground; black smoke billowing up from the Pentagon; the wreckage of Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, where the actions of heroic citizens saved even more heartbreak and destruction.

And yet we know that the worst images are those that were unseen to the world: the empty seat at the dinner table; children who were forced to grow up without their mother or their father; parents who would never know the feeling of their child's embrace; nearly 3,000 citizens taken from us, leaving a gaping hole in our hearts.

On September 11, 2001, in our time of grief, the American people came together. We offered our neighbors a hand, and we offered the wounded our blood. We reaffirmed our ties to each other and our love of community and country. On that day, no matter where we came from, what God we prayed to, or what race or ethnicity we were, we were united as one American family.

We were also united in our resolve to protect our Nation and to bring those who committed this vicious attack to justice. We quickly learned that the 9/11 attacks were carried out by Al Qaida, an organization headed by Usama bin Laden, which had openly declared war on the United States and was committed to killing innocents in our country and around the globe. And so we went to war against Al Qaida to protect our citizens, our friends, and our allies.

Over the last 10 years, thanks to the tireless and heroic work of our military and our counterterrorism professionals, we've made great strides in that effort. We've disrupted terrorist attacks and strengthened our homeland defense. In Afghanistan, we removed the Taliban Government, which had given bin Laden and Al Qaida safe haven and support. And around the globe, we worked with our friends and allies to capture or kill scores of Al Qaida terrorists, including several who were a part of the 9/11 plot.

Yet Usama bin Laden avoided capture and escaped across the Afghan border into Pakistan. Meanwhile, Al Qaida continued to operate from along that border and operate through its affiliates across the world.

And so shortly after taking office, I directed Leon Panetta, the Director of the CIA, to make the killing or capture of bin Laden the top priority of our war against Al Qaida, even as we continued our broader efforts to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat his network.

Then, last August, after years of painstaking work by our intelligence community, I was briefed on a possible lead to bin Laden. It was far from certain, and it took many months to run this thread to ground. I met repeatedly with my national security team as we developed more information about the possibility that we had located bin Laden hiding within a compound deep inside Pakistan. And finally, last week, I determined that we had enough intelligence to take action and authorized an operation to get Usama bin Laden and bring him to justice.

Today, at my direction, the United States launched a targeted operation against that compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. A small team of Americans carried out the operation with extraordinary courage and capability. No Americans were harmed. They took care to avoid civilian casualties. After a firefight, they killed Usama bin Laden and took custody of his body.

For over two decades, bin Laden has been Al Qaida's leader and symbol and has continued to plot attacks against our country and our friends and allies. The death of bin Laden marks the most significant achievement to date in our Nation's effort to defeat Al Qaida.

Yet his death does not mark the end of our effort. There's no doubt that Al Qaida will continue to pursue attacks against us. We must—and we will—remain vigilant at home and abroad.

As we do, we must also reaffirm that the United States is not and never will be at war with Islam. I've made clear, just as President Bush did shortly after 9/11, that our war is not against Islam. Bin Laden was not a Muslim leader, he was a mass murderer of Muslims. Indeed, Al Qaida has slaughtered scores of Muslims in many countries, including our own. So his demise should be welcomed by all who believe in peace and human dignity.

Over the years, I've repeatedly made clear that we would take action within Pakistan if we knew where bin Laden was. That is what we've done. But it's important to note that our counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan helped lead us to bin Laden and the compound where he was hiding. Indeed, bin Laden had declared war against Pakistan as well and ordered attacks against the Pakistani people.

Tonight I called President Zardari, and my team has also spoken with their Pakistani counterparts. They agree that this is a good and historic day for both of our nations. And going forward, it is essential that Pakistan continue to join us in the fight against Al Qaida and its affiliates.

The American people did not choose this fight. It came to our shores and started with the senseless slaughter of our citizens. After nearly 10 years of service, struggle, and sacrifice, we know well the costs of war. These efforts weigh on me every time I, as Commander in Chief, have to sign a letter to a family that has lost a loved one or look into the eyes of a servicemember who's been gravely wounded.

So Americans understand the costs of war. Yet as a country, we will never tolerate our security being threatened nor stand idly by when our people have been killed. We will be relentless in defense of our citizens and our friends and allies. We will be true to the values that make us who we are. And on nights like this

one, we can say to those families who have lost loved ones to Al Qaida's terror: Justice has been done.

Tonight we give thanks to the countless intelligence and counterterrorism professionals who've worked tirelessly to achieve this outcome. The American people do not see their work nor know their names, but tonight they feel the satisfaction of their work and the result of their pursuit of justice.

We give thanks for the men who carried out this operation, for they exemplify the professionalism, patriotism, and unparalleled courage of those who serve our country. And they are part of a generation that has borne the heaviest share of the burden since that September day.

Finally, let me say to the families who lost loved ones on 9/11 that we have never forgotten your loss nor wavered in our commitment to see that we do whatever it takes to prevent another attack on our shores.

And tonight let us think back to the sense of unity that prevailed on 9/11. I know that it has, at times, frayed. Yet today's achievement is a testament to the greatness of our country and the determination of the American people.

The cause of securing our country is not complete. But tonight we are once again reminded that America can do whatever we set our mind to. That is the story of our history, whether it's the pursuit of prosperity for our people or the struggle for equality for all our citizens, our commitment to stand up for our values abroad, and our sacrifices to make the world a safer place.

Let us remember that we can do these things not just because of wealth or power, but because of who we are: one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Thank you. May God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President George W. Bush; and President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 2.

Remarks on Presenting Posthumously the Congressional Medal of Honor to Privates First Class Anthony T. Kaho'ohanohano and Henry Svehla
May 2, 2011

The President. Good morning, everybody. Please be seated. On behalf of Michelle and myself, welcome to the White House. To our many guests from Hawaii, aloha. And thank you, Chaplain Carver, for that wonderful invocation.

I think we can all agree, this is a good day for America. Our country has kept its commitment to see that justice is done. The world is safer; it is a better place because of the death of Usama bin Laden.

Today we are reminded that, as a nation, there's nothing we can't do when we put our shoulders to the wheel, when we work together, when we remember the sense of unity that defines us as Americans. And we've seen that spirit, that patriotism, in the crowds that have gathered here outside the White House, at Ground Zero in New York, and across the country: people holding candles, waving the flag, singing the national anthem. People proud to live in the United States of America.

And we're reminded that we are fortunate to have Americans who dedicate their lives to protecting ours. They volunteer, they train, they endure separation from their families. They take extraordinary risks so that we can be safe. They get the job done. We may not always know their names. We may not always know their stories. But they are there, every day, on the frontlines of freedom. And we are truly blessed.

I do want to acknowledge before we begin the ceremony two individuals who have been critical as part of my team who are here today. First of all, I think somebody who will go down as one of the finest Secretaries of Defense in

our history, Secretary Bob Gates, who is here. And sitting beside him, someone who served with incredible valor on behalf of this country and is now somebody who I think will go down as one of the greatest Secretaries of Veterans Affairs in our history, Eric Shinseki.

Now, I have to say that, as Commander in Chief, I could not be prouder of our men and women in uniform. That is true now, in today's wars. It has been true in all of our wars. And it is why we are here today.

Long ago, a poet of the First World War wrote of the sacrifice of young soldiers in war:

> They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
> Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
> At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
> We will remember them.

Today we are joined by two American families who, six decades ago, gave our Nation one of their own: Private First Class Henry Svehla and Private First Class Anthony Kaho'ohanohano.

They did not grow old. These two soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice when they were just 19 and 21 years old. Age did not weary them. In the hearts of their families, they remain forever young, loving sons, protective brothers, hometown kids who stood tall in America's hometown—in America's uniform.

Today we remember them. And we honor them with the highest military decoration that our Nation can bestow, the Medal of Honor. In so doing, we also honor their families, who remind us that it is our extraordinary military families who also bear the heavy burden of war.

We are joined by Members of Congress who are here. We are very grateful for you. We are also joined by leaders from the Army and our Armed Forces, including Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen and the Vice Chairman, General Jim "Hoss" Cartwright. Where—where—there they are, right there.

And this is not in the script, but let me just acknowledge that without the leadership of Bob Gates, Mike Mullen, Hoss Cartwright, today and yesterday would not have happened. And their steadiness and leadership has been extraordinary. I could not be prouder of them, and I am so grateful that they've been part of our team, so—[*applause*].

I especially want to welcome some of those who fought so bravely 60 years ago, our inspiring Korean veterans—Korean war veterans who have made the trip here. And I also want to acknowledge those who are welcoming two more American heroes into the ranks, members of the Medal of Honor Society. Thank you so much for your presence.

This past November, I paid a visit to South Korea, a visit that coincided with the 60th anniversary of the start of the Korean war, as well as November 11, Veterans Day. And I was privileged to spend part of the day with our troops and with dozens of veterans of the Korean war, members of a generation who, in the words of their memorial here in Washington, fought for "a country they never knew and a people they never met."

It was a generation that included Private First Class Anthony Kaho'ohanohano. Tony grew up in Hawaii, in Maui. He learned early that we have a duty to others from his father, a dedicated police officer, and his mother, who devoted herself to their nine children. Tony was a tall guy. He loved Hawaii, swimming in the ocean, playing basketball—sounds like my kind of guy. [*Laughter*] His siblings remember him as the big brother, quiet but strong, who took care of them, stood up for them in the neighborhood, and who would treat them to ice cream.

Tony's loyalty to family was matched by his love of country, even though Hawaii wasn't even a State yet. By September 1951, the Korean war had been raging for more than a year, and Tony was part of the 17th Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, which had been fighting for strategic hills that could shape the course of the war.

His squad was near a village called Chupa-ri when they came under ferocious attack. With the enemy advancing, with his men outnumbered, Tony made a decision. He ordered his squad to fall back and seek cover. And then Tony did something else. He stayed behind.

Machine gun in hand, he laid down fire so his men could get to safety. He was one American soldier, alone, against an approaching army.

When Tony was wounded in the shoulder, he fought on. He threw grenade after grenade. When his weapon ran out of ammunition, he grabbed another. And when he ran out of ammo, he reached for the only thing left, a shovel. That's when the enemy overran his position. And in those final moments, the combat was hand to hand.

It was that bravery, that courage, of a single soldier that inspired his men to regroup, to rally, and to drive the enemy back. And when they finally reached Tony's position, the measure of his valor became clear. After firing so many bullets, the barrel of his machine gun was literally bent. But Tony had stood his ground. He had saved the lives of his men.

After his death, Tony was awarded the Army's second highest award for valor, the Distinguished Service Cross. But his family felt he deserved more. And so did Senator and World War II vet Danny Akaka. We're honored that Senator Akaka has joined us, as well as Mazie Hirono. And obviously, we are extraordinarily grateful that we're joined by another Senator and a Medal of Honor recipient, Dan Inouye. Thank you so much for your presence.

Now, Hawaii is a small State, but the Kaho'ohanohanos are a very big family. In fact, I went to high school with one of their cousins, Whitey. Tell Whitey I said, "How's it?" [*Laughter*]

This is a remarkable family. Service defines them. Tony's father and all six sons served in the military. Another member of the family has served in Afghanistan. Nearly 30 members of the family have traveled from Hawaii to be here, including Tony's sister Elaine and brother Eugene.

For the sacrifice that your family endured, for the service that your family has rendered, thank you so much. *Mahalo nui loa.*

I would ask that you all join me in welcoming Tony's nephew George, who worked for so many years to get his uncle the honor that he deserved. George.

[*At this point, Maj. Reginald McClam, USMC, Marine Corps Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. About the time that Tony was inspiring his men, another young soldier was joining up with the 7th Infantry Division in Korea: Private First Class Henry Svehla. He grew up in New Jersey. He loved fishing on the Jersey shore. He was one of six kids and the youngest son, but the one who seemed to take care of everybody else.

His sister Dorothy remembers how their mom would be in the kitchen, at the end of a long day, trying to cook dinner for six kids. Henry, a teenager, would walk in, grab his mother's hand, and dance her around the kitchen. "If anybody needed him," said Dorothy, "Henry was there."

And he was there for America, in Korea, as the war neared its third and final year. Henry knew the dangers. And in one of his last letters home, he wrote, "I may not return."

That June of 1952, the heat was unbearable. The monsoon rains and mosquitoes were relentless. But the 7th Infantry Division pushed on, probing enemy lines, fighting bunker by bunker, hill by hill. And as Henry and his company neared the top of one hill, the rocky slopes seemed to explode with enemy fire. His unit started to falter, and that's when Henry made his move.

He stood up, he looked ahead, and he charged forward into a hail of bullets. Those who were there describe how he kept firing his weapon, kept hurling grenades, and how—even after being wounded in the face—he refused medical attention and kept leading the charge.

That's when an enemy grenade landed among his men. Every human instinct, every impulse, would tell a person to turn away. But at that critical moment, Henry Svehla did the opposite. He threw himself on that grenade. And with his sacrifice, he saved the lives of his fellow soldiers.

Henry Svehla's body has never been recovered. That's a wound in the heart of his family that has never been fully healed. It's also a re-

minder that, as a nation, we must never forget those who didn't come home, are missing in action, who were taken prisoner of war. And we must never stop trying to bring them back to their families.

Henry was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, but his family believed that he had earned this Nation's highest military honor. They contacted their Congressman and his staff, who made it their mission. And we thank Representative Bill Pascrell for making this day possible.

Henry's parents and brother did not live to see this day, but two of his sisters, Dorothy and Sylvia, are with us. Dorothy, Sylvia, you remind us that behind every American who wears our Nation's uniform stands a family who serves with them. And behind every American who lays down their life for our country is a family who mourns them and honors them for the rest of their lives. Every day, for nearly 60 years, you have lived the poet's words:

> At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
> We will remember them.

And so I want to conclude today by inviting everyone to join me in welcoming Henry's sister Dorothy to the stage for the presentation of the medal.

[*Maj. Reginald McClam, USMC, Marine Corps Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Let's give both families a big round of applause for Anthony and for Henry.

[*Maj. Gen. Douglas L. Carver, USA, Chief of Chaplains, then read a prayer*.]

Audience members. Amen.

The President. Thank you so much, everyone. Please enjoy the reception.

And again, to the families, we could not be prouder of Anthony and Henry. We are grateful for their sacrifice. We are grateful for your sacrifice. You have made this country safer. Tony and Henry stand as a model of courage and patriotism.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you, everyone.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1.

Statement on Holocaust Remembrance Day
May 2, 2011

I join people here at home, in Israel, and around the world in commemorating Holocaust Remembrance Day and in honoring the memory of all those who suffered, died, and lost loved ones in one of the most barbaric acts in human history.

More than six decades after the Holocaust and at a time when Holocaust denial and genocidal ideologies persist, our grief and our outrage over the Nazis' murder of 6 million Jews and so many others have not diminished. This year marks both the 65th anniversary of the verdicts at the first Nuremberg trial, a defining moment in international justice, and the 50th anniversary of Adolf Eichmann's trial, where the world heard firsthand testimonies from those who had suffered the horrors of the Holocaust. From this tragedy, we see the cost of allowing hatred go unanswered in the world, but from this justice, we also see the power of holding the perpetrators of genocide accountable. Remembering these events only reinforces our solemn commitment to confront those who tell lies about our history and to stop the spread of hate in our own time.

We must heed the urgency to listen to and care for the last living survivors, camp liberators, and the witnesses to the Shoah. And we

must meet our sacred responsibility to honor all those who perished by recalling their courage and dignity in the face of unspeakable atrocities, by insisting that the world never forget them, and by always standing up against intolerance and injustice.

Statement on Polish Constitution Day
May 2, 2011

On behalf of the American people, I send my best wishes to all who celebrate Polish Constitution Day here in America, in Poland, and around the world. Since adopting their Constitution in 1791, the Polish people have endured tremendous tragedy and challenges, yet their perseverance has offered hope and inspiration to people around the world. Even today, fledgling democratic movements look to Poland as an example and guide. Here in the United States, Polish Americans are an important part of our national character. As strong NATO allies, the United States and Poland are working together to promote stability, security, and economic opportunity in Europe, Afghanistan, and around the world.

I look forward to deepening the enduring ties between the United States and Poland when I visit Warsaw later this month.

Message to the Senate on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
May 2, 2011

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith Protocols I and II to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty ("the Treaty"), signed on behalf of the United States at Cairo, Egypt, on April 11, 1996. I also transmit for the information of the Senate the Treaty to which these Protocols relate, a third Protocol to the Treaty, and the Department of State's Overview of the Protocols, which includes a detailed article-by-article analysis of both the Protocols and the Treaty.

I am convinced that it is in the best interest of the United States to ratify Protocols I and II to the Treaty. This step will strengthen our relations with our African friends and allies, enhance U.S. security by furthering our global nonproliferation and arms control objectives, demonstrate our commitment to the decisions taken at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and contribute significantly to the realization of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in all its aspects. As the Department of State's Overview of the Protocols explains, entry into force of Protocols I and II for the United States would require no changes in U.S. law, policy, or practice.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to Protocols I and II to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, and give its advice and consent to their ratification, subject to the statements contained in the Department of State's Overview of the Protocols.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
May 2, 2011.

Message to the Senate on the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty
May 2, 2011

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith Protocols 1, 2, and 3 to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty ("the Treaty"), signed on behalf of the United States at Suva on March 25, 1996. I also transmit for the information of the Senate the Treaty to which these Protocols relate and the Department of State's Overview of the Protocols, which includes a detailed article-by-article analysis of both the Protocols and the Treaty.

Ratification of Protocols 1, 2, and 3 to the Treaty would fully support U.S. nonproliferation policy and goals, and I am convinced that it is in the best interest of the United States to ratify these Protocols. This step will strengthen our relations with our South Pacific friends and allies and enhance U.S. security by furthering our global nonproliferation and arms control objectives. As the Overview of the Department of State explains, entry into force of Protocols 1, 2, and 3 for the United States would require no changes in U.S. law, policy, or practice.

I recommend that the Senate give favorable consideration to Protocols 1, 2, and 3 to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty and give its advice and consent to their ratification, subject to the statements described in the Overview of the Department of State.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
May 2, 2011.

Remarks at a Dinner for Congressional Leaders and Their Spouses
May 2, 2011

Thank you, everyone. Please—thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Good evening, all of you. On behalf of Michelle and myself, I just want to welcome everybody to the White House. We scheduled this dinner a few weeks ago because I thought it would be a good opportunity for leaders of both parties and their spouses to spend some time together outside of politics. And tonight seems like an especially fitting occasion to do this.

Obviously, we've all had disagreements and differences in the past. I suspect we'll have them again in the future. But last night, as Americans learned that the United States had carried out an operation that resulted in the capture and death of Usama bin Laden, we—[*applause*]—goodness, thank you. You know, I think we experienced the same sense of unity that prevailed on 9/11. We were reminded again that there is a pride in what this Nation stands for and what we can achieve, that runs far deeper than party, far deeper than politics.

I want to again recognize the heroes who carried out this incredibly dangerous mission, as well as all the military and counterterrorism professionals who made the mission possible. I also want to thank the Members of Congress from both parties who have given extraordinary support to our military and our intelligence officials. Without your support, they could not do what they do.

I know that that unity that we felt on 9/11 has frayed a little bit over the years, and I have no illusions about the difficulties of the debates that we'll have to be engaged in, in the weeks and months to come. But I also know there have been several moments like this during the course of this year that have brought us together as an American family, whether it was the tragedy in Tucson, or most recently, our unified response to the terrible storms that have taken place in the South.

Last night was one of those moments. And so tonight it is my fervent hope that we can harness some of that unity and some of that

pride to confront the many challenges that we still face. But to all of you here tonight, we are joyful that you could join us. And please have a little bit of fun. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:03 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1.

Remarks Honoring the 2011 National and State Teachers of the Year
May 3, 2011

The President. Thank you, everybody. Please, have a seat. Please, have a seat.

What a beautiful day, a wonderful day to celebrate teachers and teaching. I am honored to welcome this group of outstanding teachers behind me to the White House. They are the best of the best. And even though we can never really thank teachers enough, today is a chance to offer them a small token of our appreciation for the difference they make in the lives of our children and the future of our country.

I want to start by acknowledging somebody who I think will end up being one of the greatest Secretaries of Education we've ever had, who could not be more passionate about making sure that our young people get a great start in life, and that's Arne Duncan. Give him a big round of applause.

I am very proud that we've got some wonderful Members of Congress who are here from the great State of Maryland, who I think are pretty proud of you. [*Laughter*]

As I've said before, it's not just the winners of the Super Bowl who deserve to be celebrated. And that's why I also want to welcome the teams from the National Science Bowl who are here with us today. Where are they? There you are, right back there. Good to see you. Secretary Chu told me that you all did a great job this year. So congratulations.

And finally, I want to congratulate our State and national Teachers of the Year.

Now, I'm not sure if you can tell, but it's been a while since I was in school. [*Laughter*] I haven't had to ask for a hall pass in a few years. I think it is important to note—this is off script, but the Teacher of the Year from Hawaii—where is she?—wave—teaches at the first school I ever went to, Noelani School up in Manoa in Hawaii. So I thought that was pretty cool. [*Laughter*] I went there in first grade. [*Laughter*] It's a wonderful school.

But even after all this time, I still remember the special teachers that touched my life. And we all do. We remember the way they challenged us, the way they made us feel, how they pushed us, the encouragement that they gave us, the values that they taught us, the way they helped us to understand the world and analyze it and ask questions. They helped us become the people that we are today.

For me, one of those people was my fifth grade teacher, Ms. Mabel Hefty. When I walked into Ms. Hefty's classroom for the first time, I was a new kid who had been living overseas for a few years, had a funny name nobody could pronounce. But she didn't let me withdraw into myself. She helped me believe that I had something special to say. She made me feel special. She reinforced the sense of empathy and thoughtfulness that my mother and my grandparents had tried hard to instill in me, and that's a lesson that I still carry with me as President.

Ms. Hefty is no longer with us, but I often think about her and how much of a difference she made in my life. And everybody's got a story like that, about that teacher who made the extra effort to shape our lives in important ways.

What people, I think, don't realize is just how much work and how much sacrifice it takes to make that connection. My sister is a teacher, and so I've had the occasion of just watching her preparing lesson plans and then going out of their—her way to call that student who she thinks has potential but is slipping away, and working with parents who maybe

don't know how to support their kids. And it's tiring work, but how incredibly gratifying it must be.

Because in the end, the most effective teachers are the ones who are constantly striving to get better and help their students get better: those teachers who stay up late grading papers; the teachers who give up their afternoons and free periods to give that student a little bit of extra one-on-one help and spend evenings and weekends developing lesson plans and activities that don't just teach the material, but make it come alive; and the teachers who see the potential in students even when the students themselves don't see that potential.

And the teacher standing next to me, Michelle Shearer, I think, is an example of that kind of teacher. Michelle teaches AP chemistry at Urbana High School in Maryland. Before that, she taught chemistry and math at the Maryland School for the Deaf. That's, in fact, how I just learned she got into teaching, was initially volunteering, working with deaf students.

Michelle's specialty is taking students who are normally underrepresented in science—minorities, women, students with disabilities, even students who say equations and formulas are just not their thing—and helping them discover the scientist within.

At the Maryland School for the Deaf, AP—Michelle taught AP chemistry for the first time in the school's 135-year history, explaining concepts like kinetics and electrochemistry using only her hands. When she suggested her students also sign up for AP calculus, she was met with some questioning looks. "Why?" one student asked. And she said, "Because you can," she signed back. And for the next 2 years, she spent her planning period teaching calculus, probability, and statistics to students who never would have had the opportunity to take those classes otherwise.

When Michelle moved to Urbana in 2006, 11 students were enrolled in AP chemistry. This year, there are 92. Some of her former students have gone on to become science and math teachers themselves, applying the techniques they learned in the classroom to make a tough subject manageable and fun. One student wrote, "You have not only shown me how to be the best chemistry student I can be, but also the best person I can be."

I should also mention, by the way, that Michelle's husband is an AP physics teacher and her dad and mom, who are here, your dad taught——

Michelle M. Shearer. Chemistry. He was a chemist.

The President. ——chemistry. He was a chemist. So—and her mom was a music teacher. So she had a little bit of a jump on this whole teaching thing—[*laughter*]—and this whole science thing. But what an incredible testament when a student tells you not only you made chemistry interesting, but you made them a better person.

America will only be as strong in this century as the education that we provide our students. And at a time when our success as a nation depends on our ability to outeducate other countries, we desperately need more Michelles out there.

And that's why we've set a goal of preparing 100,000 new teachers in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math over the next decade, fields that will give students the skills they need to compete with their peers anywhere in the world. And to help those teachers succeed, I've called on Congress to move quickly to fix No Child Left Behind in a way that makes it less punitive, more focused, more flexible. That means doing a better job of preparing teachers, doing a better job of measuring their success in the classroom, helping them improve in providing professional development, and then holding them accountable. Because if we truly believe in the importance of teachers, then we've got to help teachers become more effective.

In the words of one of my favorite poets, William Butler Yeats, "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." The teachers here today and thousands like them are surrounded every day by young people who will shape our future. But it takes a special person to recognize that. It takes a special person to light that fire, to raise our children's

expectations for themselves, and never give up on them no matter how challenging it might be.

All of us are here because at some point, somebody did that for us. And so today we are honored to recognize these outstanding men and women and all the teachers like them who have always had—and will continue to have—such an important impact on our lives.

So with that, I would like to present Michelle with her apple.

[*At this point, the President presented the Teacher of the Year award to Ms. Shearer, who then made brief remarks.*]

The President. The—[*applause*]—I think you can see why Michelle is Teacher of the Year. I think I'm going to send her up to Congress to give them a pep talk. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, everybody. This ends the ceremony, but again, we are so grateful to Michelle, but we are also grateful to all the Teachers of the Year. Give them one more big round of applause.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sens. Barbara A. Mikulski and Benjamin L. Cardin; Kristen Brummel, teacher, Noelani Elementary School in Honolulu, HI; and George Shearer, husband, Phillip Meredith, father, and Beverly Meredith, mother, of Michelle M. Shearer. He also referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng.

Statement on World Press Freedom Day
May 3, 2011

On this World Press Freedom Day, the United States joins with people around the world in reaffirming the fundamental freedoms of expression, assembly, and association that provide the foundation for media to operate freely and keep citizens informed. We rededicate ourselves to the basic principle enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that every person has the right "to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." And we recognize the courageous journalists who work every day to give meaning to these rights, often at great risk to their lives, as we have seen most recently with the tragic deaths of journalists in Libya.

Governments have an obligation to protect these rights and freedoms. Yet this year alone, at least 16 journalists have already been killed and more than 145 remain imprisoned around the world, simply for daring to report the truth. Dozens of countries continue to stand in the way of a free press. This includes recent crackdowns on the independent press in Bahrain, threats against and arrests of domestic and foreign journalists in China, political persecution of independent journalists and bloggers in Iran, arrests and detention of international journalists in Syria, and the Government takeover of independent media outlets in Venezuela. Countries such as Belarus, Burma, Cuba, Eritrea, Libya, North Korea, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan also continue to be notoriously repressive of press freedoms. Freedom of expression is also under attack through criminal violence and impunity in countries like Mexico, Honduras, and Russia.

As we witnessed in the historic events in Tunisia and Egypt, new media tools can also help empower citizens exercise their freedoms of speech and association, yet these same 21st-century tools can be used to filter, block, and restrict free expression. That is why we must always stand up for the free flow of information around the world.

History shows that one of the ingredients of successful, prosperous, and stable societies is a free press where citizens can freely access information and hold their governments accountable. On this World Press Freedom Day, we

recognize the vital role that journalists play in strengthening democratic governance around the world and we honor all those who have given their lives in courageous pursuit of the truth.

Remarks at the Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride Opening Ceremony
May 4, 2011

The President. Thank you. Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to the White House. Thank you, Tammy, for the kind introduction, but more importantly, for your extraordinary service to our country in Iraq, in Illinois, and now as Assistant Secretary of the VA, where you're a champion for your fellow wounded warriors. God bless you. We are so thankful for Tammy Duckworth. Give her a big round of applause.

I was proud to kick off this Soldier Ride 2 years ago. I'm just as thrilled to be kicking it off today. I'm pleased that we're joined by a number of Members of Congress here. The Sun is coming out just as we start. We're also joined by the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and one of my top advisers over the last several years—I couldn't be more grateful to him—General Jim "Hoss" Cartwright. Please give him a big round of applause.

Now, this is one of the most inspiring events that we do at the White House. We're joined by folks from every service. We've got Army. We've got some Navy folks. We've got Air Force. You know we've got some Marines. And we've got some Coast Guard. And just as importantly, we are joined by those who serve and sacrifice alongside you, and that is all our outstanding military families.

Now, you've all got your gear on. You're on your bikes. You all look pretty sharp.

Audience member. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you. [*Laughter*] You're ready to go. So I'm not going to hold you back too long here with a long speech. But it is important to remember what this day is about.

Today is a reminder, as Michelle and Jill Biden have already said, that every American, every single person in this country, can do something to support our remarkable troops and their families. Everybody can do something.

So 7 years ago, a bartender from Long Island had the same idea. He wasn't from a military family. He had never served in the military. But he knew that he owed our military something. He was just an ordinary American who was grateful for the service of all those who wear the uniform. And he said, "I just wanted to give something back."

So he jumped on his bike and rode across the country, over 5,000 miles, to raise funds and awareness for our wounded warriors. Today there are Soldier Rides all across America giving our wounded warriors the confidence and support they need to recover. That's the difference a single person can make. Today we want to thank Chris Carney and everyone from the Wounded Warrior Project for reminding us of our obligations to each other as Americans. Give them a big round of applause.

And today is also a tribute to all of you, a generation that has written your own extraordinary chapter in the American story. Our Nation has been at war now for nearly 10 years. Tour after tour, year after year, you've done your duty. You've met every challenge, from the deserts of Iraq to the mountains of Afghanistan. You've risked everything. And you've carried in your hearts the memory of fallen heroes who gave everything.

You've earned your place among the greatest of generation of Americans. And we saw that again this past weekend when, thanks to the courage and precision of our forces, the terrorists who started this war and who took so many innocent lives learned that America does not forget; America will ensure that justice is done.

Of course, for our riders here today, coming home from war marked the beginning of another battle: the battle to recover, to stand again, to walk again, to relearn, in some cases, the simple things that are the true pleasures of life—dancing with your spouse or holding your children. In many ways, this might have been the toughest battle they've ever fought.

But I want all of you to know something. You inspire me. You inspire everybody here. Michelle and I treasure the moments that we've had with some of you and your families.

Corporal Nickolas Edinger is here. Where's Nickolas? Right there, right in the middle. He was one of our special guests when Michelle and I hosted a recent dinner for military leaders at the White House. He was serving in Afghanistan when an IED blast cost him one of his legs. But he's here today as part of his journey to recovery. And I want to just welcome Nickolas back.

Private First Class Corey Kent, where's Corey? Corey is right there. I met Corey during one of my visits to Walter Reed last year. And it was my honor to pin a Purple Heart on him. He's lost both legs. But he's working hard to recover, and he's here today, ready to ride. So, Corey, you are an inspiration.

Ted Wade is here. Ted, where are you? Right there. After sustaining multiple injuries in Iraq, Ted's doctors did not think he would survive. But he persevered. He pulled through. And I was honored that Ted and his wife Sarah joined us last year when I signed legislation for veterans and caregivers. I'm pleased that Ted and Sarah are back with us again today because I can report that starting next week, our veterans, wounded warriors, and caregivers can start applying for the support that you need and deserve. We are going to get this done, and we're very proud of that.

Now, Sarah once said of Ted, "Just like he needed a team in the military to accomplish the mission, he needs a team at home for the longer war." And so I say to all of you today, we're going to keep building that team that you need for recovery. We're determined to take care of you as well as you've taken care of us.

So to all the riders here today, I want to say, as your Commander in Chief and as an American, thank you. We are grateful for you. You represent the very best in America. And in your fight to recover and in the ride that you're about to begin, we see the values and virtues that make our country great.

We may take a hit. We may endure great loss. But we are a strong and resilient people. We push on. We persevere. We're confident in our cause. And we know that, like generations of Americans before us, we will emerge stronger than before.

So God bless you all. God bless the United States of America. And with that, let's get this thing started. I think I've got a horn.

All right. Are you all ready? You look ready. One, two, three.

[*At this point, the President sounded the horn to begin the Soldier Ride.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chris Carney, founder, Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride.

Statement on Elections in Nigeria
May 4, 2011

This morning I called President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria to congratulate him on his election victory and to commend the people of Nigeria for their resolve and patience during last month's historic Presidential, legislative, and gubernatorial elections. The success of the elections was a testament to Nigerian voters who waited in long lines, stayed to watch their votes counted, and were determined that these elections mark a new chapter in Nigerian history. Credit also belongs to the Independent National Electoral Commission, the National Youth Service Corps, and Nigeria's vibrant civil society, all of which must play a role in ensuring that the final results reflect the will of the Nigerian people and that Nigerian authorities investigate and address any allegations of fraud or irregularities.

While the majority of Nigerians cast their ballots free from intimidation and coercion, the postelection violence that followed the Presidential election on April 16 was deplorable. Violence has no place in a democratic society, and it is the responsibility of all Nigerians to reject

it. Democracy, however, neither begins nor ends with elections. Now is the time for Nigeria's leaders and its people to come together and build the future that they deserve, a multiparty democracy that addresses the aspirations of all Nigerians, especially its youth, who did so much to make the recent elections a success and who will define the nation's future.

As Africa's most populous country, Nigeria can show what is possible when people of different parties, ethnicities, and faith backgrounds come together to seek peace, provide for their families, and give their children a better future. Today, Nigerians have an historic opportunity to move forward together and make their nation into a model for Africa. As I told President Jonathan, I look forward to strengthening our partnership with Nigeria so that this and future generations of Nigerians can live in peace, democracy, and prosperity.

Remarks at a New York City Fire Department Firehouse in New York City
May 5, 2011

Well, listen, the main reason I came here is because I heard the food's pretty good. [*Laughter*]

But to the commissioner, to Mayor Giuliani—who obviously performed heroic acts almost 10 years ago—but most of all, to all of you, I wanted to just come up here to thank you.

This is a symbolic site of the extraordinary sacrifice that was made on that terrible day almost 10 years ago. Obviously, we can't bring back the friends that were lost, and I know that each and every one of you not only grieve for them, but have also, over the last 10 years, dealt with their family, their children, tried to give them comfort, tried to give them support.

Well, what happened on Sunday because of the courage of our military and the outstanding work of our intelligence sent a message around the world, but also sent a message here back home, that when we say we will never forget, we mean what we say. And our commitment to making sure that justice is done was something that transcended politics, transcended party; it didn't matter which administration was in, it didn't matter who was in charge, we were going to make sure that the perpetrators of that horrible act, that they received justice.

So it's some comfort, I hope, to all of you to know that when those guys took those extraordinary risks going into Pakistan, that they were doing it in part because of the sacrifices that were made in this State. They were doing it in the name of your brothers that were lost.

And finally, let me just say that although 9/11 obviously was a high-water mark of courage for the New York Fire Department and a symbol of the sacrifice, you guys are making sacrifices every single day. It doesn't get as much notoriety, it doesn't get as much attention, but every time you run into a burning building, every time that you are saving lives, you're making a difference. And that's part of what makes this city great, and that's part of what makes this country great.

So I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of the American people for the sacrifices that you make every single day. And I just want to let you know that you're always going to have a President and an administration who's got your back the way you've got the backs of the people of New York over these last many years.

So God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

And with that, I'm going to try some of that food. All right? Appreciate you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:29 a.m. at Engine Company 54, Ladder Company 4, and Battalion 9 firehouse. In his remarks, he referred to Salvatore J. Cassano, fire commissioner, New York City Fire Department; and former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City.

Remarks at the New York Police Department's First Precinct Station in New York City
May 5, 2011

The President. Well, listen, everybody, the—I'm not here to make a long speech. I am here basically to shake your hands and just to say how proud I am of all of you.

Obviously, we had an important day on Sunday. The reason what—it was important, was because it sent a signal around the world that we have never forgotten the extraordinary sacrifices that were made on September 11. We've never forgotten the tragedy. We've never forgotten the loss of life. We've never forgotten the courage that was shown by the NYPD, by the firefighters, by the first-responders.

My understanding is all of you were there that day. And I know you'll never forget. I know it's hard to fill the hole that occurred as a consequence of you losing folks who you had worked with for so long. But what, hopefully, this weekend does is it says we keep them in our hearts, we haven't forgotten, we said what we're—we did what we said we were going to do, and that America, even in the midst of tragedy, will come together—across the years, across politics, across party, across administrations—to make sure that justice is done.

And so since that time I know a lot of you have probably comforted loved ones of those who were lost. And a lot of you have probably looked after kids who grew up without a parent. And a lot of you continue to do extraordinary—extraordinarily courageous acts without a lot of fanfare. What we did on Sunday was directly connected to what you do every single day. And I know I speak for the military teams and the intelligence teams that helped get bin Laden in saying that we know the sacrifices and courage that you show as well, and that you are part of the team that helped us achieve our goal, but also help us keep our citizens safe each and every day.

So I couldn't be prouder of all of you. I couldn't be more grateful to you. And I hope that you know that the country will continue to stand behind you going forward, because there are still going to be threats out there and you're still going to be called on to take courageous actions and to remain vigilant, but you're going to have the entire country behind you when you do.

All right? God bless you.

I very much appreciate the fact that Mayor Giuliani is here, because obviously we remember his leadership and courage on that day as well. And it's a testimony that we may have our differences, politically, in ordinary times, but when it comes to keeping this country safe, we are first and foremost Americans.

Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City. Thank you very much.

Audience member. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you, sir. Appreciate you.

All right, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:38 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1.

Remarks at a Cinco de Mayo Celebration
May 5, 2011

The President. Thank you. *Gracias. Buenas noches. Bienvenidos.* Welcome to the Cinco de Mayo at the White House.

Nothing ruins a good fiesta like a long speech from a politician. [*Laughter*] So I'm going to keep it short.

The First Lady. Keep it short. [*Laughter*]

The President. Keep it short. I just want to acknowledge a few proud Latinos and friends of Latinos who are here with us tonight. A great friend to me and to the United States, Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan is here from Mexico with his lovely wife Veronica. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar is in the house. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis is here. Several Members of Congress have made the trek tonight. And everybody please join me in wishing a *feliz cumpleanos* to the chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Charlie Gonzalez. Happy birthday, Charlie.

We are also joined by Hispanic Americans serving at every level of my administration, some who've contributed to a new web site that we launched this week: whitehouse.gov/hispanic. So check out the web site. And welcome to all of you who are serving on the commission to explore the creation of a new national museum of the American Latino. Today they presented me with their final report to Congress, and I'm grateful for their hard work, and hopefully, we will see that museum become a reality. So we're very grateful to them.

Finally, I want to thank my band, the United States Marine Band. And we are looking forward to hearing Javier Cortes spin some of his records, and he has done great work, so I know that he's going to keep this party lively this evening.

But this is really a day for commemorating our shared heritage—our shared heritage, Mexicans and Americans. It's a day for remembering that America is a richer, stronger, more vibrant place thanks to the contributions of Mexican Americans to the life of this Nation, contributions in commerce, culture, in language and literature, in faith, and obviously in food. [*Laughter*]

I asked Michelle the other day, I said, "What's your favorite food?" Because we were sitting around with the girls. She said, "Oh, Mexican food." That's—[*applause*]. You do not want to be between Michelle and a tamale. [*Laughter*] It is true. It's true. But she's moving, though, so she can afford to have as many tamales as she wants. [*Laughter*]

It is also a day for honoring the service of the many Mexican Americans who serve proudly in our country's uniform, and we are grateful to them.

And it's a day we commit ourselves to advancing the aspirations of all Latinos and reaffirm the ideals that we share as Americans. That means improving the education that we provide to our children, strengthening the social safety net that we build for our seniors and the poor and the sick, living up to our values as a nation of immigrants that built this country into the economic powerhouse that it is and the beacon of hope that it is around the world.

I've talked to you in recent weeks about this immigration issue. I strongly believe that we've got to fix this broken system so that it meets the needs of our 21st-century economy and our security needs. I want to work with Republicans and Democrats to protect our borders, to enforce our laws, and also to address the status of millions of undocumented workers. I want to sign the "DREAM Act" into law. This is not going to be easy. It's going to require bipartisan support. I'm going to need your help. We've got to keep doing the hard work of changing minds and changing hearts and changing votes, one at a time. But all of you are going to be out there, and you're going to have to help make this happen.

Let me just wrap up by saying this. Last week, I had the honor of traveling down to Florida and delivering the commencement address at Miami Dade College. And Dr. Eduardo Padron is here. There he is over there. And I want to brag on him a little bit because he's actually a graduate of the school.

This is a school with more than 170,000 students who come from 181 different countries, speak 94 different languages. The graduates were so excited. They were so proud. They spent a good portion of the ceremony dancing and doing the wave. [*Laughter*] I mean, you know, there were Cubanos there. There were Haitians. There were Puertorriquenos. I mean everybody was there. [*Laughter*] Everybody was there, and everybody could dance. [*Laughter*]

And they were excited not just to finally get their exams out of the way, but because they

finally knew what it was to achieve a dream. Many of them were the first in their families ever to graduate from college, and they overcame obstacles and defeated their own doubts to finish. And a lot of their parents, they're crying, and they could only dream of such a day as was happening there.

And by the way, Miami Dade is rated one of the top community colleges in the Nation. And as the ceremony—the formal ceremony finally began, the dancing quieted down a little bit. The students in the campus ROTC took turns marching the flags of the countries where—of origin for each of the graduating students. So you had 181 countries. And the students would stand up and cheer after—when the Haitian flag went by or the Colombian flag went by or—you name it, right. Everybody was getting up and cheering.

Some flags received a lot of cheers—[*laughter*]—Mexico, Guatemala. And then there were—then there was, like, the Ukrainian flag and—[*laughter*]—the Canadian flag, Estonia, and there were just a couple—[*laughter*]. But, I mean, they were proud, but it was just not as many people. [*Laughter*]

But there was one flag that every single student and spectator cheered loudly and proudly for, and that was when the American flag came through—the American flag. So it was a wonderful reminder: We have—all come from different backgrounds, we have different beliefs, we have sometimes petty and sometimes not-so-petty political differences, but we all share a set of ideals. We all have a common future. We're the heirs to mothers and fathers and grandparents, great-grandparents, who struggled and sacrificed to forge and realize the American Dream.

And that fills us with the collective responsibility to leave an even bigger and bolder, more generous, more compassionate nation for our children. That's what drives me each day. That's what inspires Michelle. I know that's what drives many of you.

So I am thrilled to have you here today, where we celebrate your incredible heritage, but we also celebrate the incredible heritage of this great country of ours.

God bless you. *Feliz Cinco de Mayo. Muchas gracias.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:21 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Eduardo J. Padron, president, Miami Dade College.

Remarks at Allison Transmission, Inc., Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana
May 6, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Good to see you. Thank you so much. Please have a seat. It is good to be back in Indianapolis. I—hello, Hoosiers! Sorry about the Pacers. [*Laughter*] I'm sorry, Mr. Mayor. [*Laughter*] Give the mayor a big round of applause. He's doing a great job.

Along with the mayor, we've got Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood in the house. Ray—[*applause*]. We've got your own Member of Congress, Andre Carson, here. And I want to thank Larry Dewey and everybody here at Allison for their extraordinary hospitality.

It is wonderful to be here. I just had a chance to see the hybrid systems that you're working on here at the plant. I love seeing high-tech machinery like this. I stand there, and people explain it to me, and I pretend like I know what they're talking about. [*Laughter*] But it looked outstanding. [*Laughter*]

What you're doing here at Allison Transmission is really important. Today, there are more than 3,800 buses using hybrid technology all over the world, buses that have already saved 15 million gallons of fuel. And pretty soon you'll be expanding this technology to trucks as well. And that means we'll have even more vehicles who are using even less oil. That means more jobs here at Allison. Last month, you added 50 jobs at this company, and I hear that you plan to add another 200 over the next 2

years. So we are very proud of that. We are very happy about that.

This is where the American economy is rebuilding, where we are regaining our footing. We just went through one of the worst recessions in our history, worst in our lifetimes, the worst since the Great Depression. But this economic momentum that's taking place here at Allison is taking place all across the country. Today we found out that we added another 268,000 private sector jobs in April. So that means over the last 14 months, just in a little bit over a year, we've added more than 2 million jobs in the private sector.

Now, we've made this progress at a time when our economy has been facing some serious headwinds, and I don't need to tell you about that. We've got high gas prices that have been eating away at your paychecks. And that is a headwind that we've got to confront. You've got the earthquake in Japan that has had an effect on manufacturing here. So there are always going to be some ups and downs like these as we come out of a recession. And there will undoubtedly be some more challenges ahead.

But the fact is that we are still making progress, and that proves how resilient the American economy is and how resilient the American worker is and that we can take a hit and we can keep on going forward. That's exactly what we're doing.

Now, despite the good work that's being done in Allison, obviously, here in Indiana and all across the country, there's still some folks who are struggling. And a lot of people are thinking, where are those new jobs going to come from that pay well, have good benefits, can support a family? And how do we finally reduce our dependence on oil so that we're not hostage to high gas prices all the time?

The reason I'm here today is because the answers to these questions are right here at Allison, right here in these vehicles, right here in these transmissions. This is where the jobs of the future are at. We're going to have a lot of jobs in the service sector because we're a mature economy, but America's economy is always going to rely on outstanding manufacturing, where we make stuff, where we're not just buying stuff overseas, but we're making stuff here and we're selling it to somebody else. And that's what Allison is all about.

This is also where a clean energy economy is being built. This is the kind of company that will make sure that America remains the most prosperous nation in the world. See, other countries understand this. We're in a competition all around the world, and other countries—Germany, China, South Korea—they know that clean energy technology is what is going to help spur job creation and economic growth for years to come.

And that's why we've got to make sure that we win that competition. I don't want the new breakthrough technologies and the new manufacturing taking place in China and India. I want all those new jobs right here in Indiana, right here in the United States of America, with American workers, American know-how, American ingenuity.

And that's also how we're going to get gas prices under control. Now, I confess, it's been a while since I filled up. [*Laughter*] Secret Service doesn't let me, you know, fill up my motorcade. [*Laughter*] But it hasn't been that long ago since I watched those numbers scroll up, and I know how tough it is. If you've got to drive to work and you may not be able to afford buying a new car, so you've got that old beater that gets you 8 miles a gallon, it's tough. It is a huge strain on a lot of people.

But if we can transition to new technologies, that's what's going to make a difference over the long term. That's how we're going to meet the goal that I've set of reducing the amount of oil that we import by one-third by the middle of the next decade. We can hit that target. We can hit that target.

Now, in the short term, we still need to do everything we can to encourage safe and responsible oil production here at home. In fact, last year, American oil production reached its highest level since 2003. So I want everybody to remember that if people ask—because sometimes I get letters from constituents who say, why aren't we just drilling more here? We're actually producing more oil here than

ever. But the challenge is, we've only got about 2 to 3 percent of the world's oil reserves, and we use 25 percent of the world's oil. So we can't just drill our way out of the problem.

If we're serious about meeting our energy challenge, we're going to have to do more than drill. And that's why the real solution is clean, homegrown energy. The real solution is advanced biofuels, and there's a lot of good biofuel work being done here in Indiana. It means that we've got to have natural gas vehicles. We've got a lot of natural gas that can be produced here in the United States of America. It means making our cars and trucks more energy efficient, because if we use less oil, that reduces demand, that brings the price down, and you will see the impact at the pump. That's what's going to make a difference, and that's why what you're doing here is so important.

Now, it turns out, even though that they don't let me go to the gas pump, I do have a lot of cars under my jurisdiction as President. The Federal fleet is enormous, and we've already doubled the number of hybrids in the Federal fleet. And I'm directing every agency to make sure that 100 percent of our cars and trucks are fuel-efficient or clean energy vehicles by 2015. So you're going to have a customer, hopefully, in the United States Government, because we want to make sure that we are making clean, fuel-efficient cars and trucks.

We've also launched private sector partnerships with companies like FedEx, UPS, utility companies. A lot of these companies that have trucks and delivery trucks that are used in urban areas with a lot of stops and starts are perfect for the technology that you're building. So we're forming partnerships to make sure that you've got more customers.

And to spur the production of fuel-efficient cars and trucks across the country, we've reached an historic agreement with every major auto company. Thanks to the leadership of Ray LaHood, they're ramping up the fuel economy of their cars and trucks. And that will not only save 1.8 billion barrels of oil, it's going to save you, the average driver, about $3,000 at the pump as cars increasingly get better gas mileage.

And this July, we're finalizing new fuel efficiency standards for heavy-duty trucks for the first time in our history. And that could actually end up saving us—we were talking about this the other day—it could end up saving us something like 500 billion barrels of oil, huge amounts of oil, because heavy trucks use so much.

We're also promoting clean energy technologies in other ways, from investing in hybrid systems like the one Allison is developing for commercial trucks to championing vehicles that run on clean-burning natural gas to spurring the creation of next-generation batteries for electric vehicles.

You know, a few years ago, America only produced 2 percent of the world's advanced batteries. Those are the batteries that are going into these new electric cars. Because of the investments that we made in the first 2 years that I was in office, we're on track to produce 40 percent of the advanced batteries. That is going to be a huge boon to American manufacturing. That's an example of a big new industry that we can create right here in the United States of America.

And to make sure we're not only investing in clean energy technologies, but encouraging people to use these new technologies, I've proposed a $7,500 tax rebate for electric vehicles. So if you do have that old beater that you need to get rid of and you decide that you're going to buy a new car, choosing an electric car, you can actually get a huge rebate that will save you money at the gas pump, but is also going to save money on your tax returns. And that will make a big difference.

We should reward also communities that are making it easier for folks to use electric vehicles and leading the way when it comes to clean energy. And that's the kind of leadership that Indianapolis is showing. You're installing natural gas pumps around town, and you're taking other steps to promote clean energy. And I hope cities and towns across this country follow in your example.

Of course, these investments in clean energy do cost some money, and we're going to need to way—find a way to pay for them. Part of the

cost can be made up by putting an end to the unwarranted subsidies that we are giving oil companies right now through the Tax Code. I want everybody to listen here. Oil companies over the last 5 years—through a recession, through ups and downs—the top five oil companies, their profits have ranged between 75 billion and 125 billion. That's with a "b"—not million, billion. And yet they still have a tax loophole that is costing taxpayers $4 billion every year. Now, if you're already paying them at the pump, we don't need to pay them through the Tax Code. We do not need to do it. Especially at a time when we're scouring every part of the budget to try to figure out how we bring down our deficit and our debt.

Now, if we're honest with ourselves, we'll admit that even if we end these taxpayer subsidies, we're still going to have more work to do in getting control of our deficit and debt. And I know that in this difficult fiscal climate, it may be tempting for some people to say, let's stop investing in hybrid technology, let's stop investing in basic research, let's stop investing in the infrastructure that's needed to make sure that we can transition to new forms of transportation. That's the temptation. But I profoundly disagree with that approach.

If we're going to win the future, we've got to cut out the things we don't need, but still make investments in the things that we do. That's what you do at home. If somebody in your family loses a job, if your hours get cut, what do you do? You may stop going out to a restaurant to eat. You may decide we're going to put off buying that new furniture or taking that vacation. But you're not going to stop fixing the boiler or the hole in the roof. You're not going to stop making sure that you got enough money to help your kids go to school. Those are the things—that's like your seed corn. You don't eat that.

The same is true for the Federal Government. We can't cut investments in clean energy that are going to help us outinnovate and outcompete and help America win the future. We're not going to stop making investments that allow plants like this one to find the new ways of doing business in the future.

I want to make sure the Federal Government is right here with you as a partner with you as you move forward, and we can do it and still get control of our debt and our deficit if we do it smart.

For nearly 100 years, this company has made its way forward, through ups and through downs, making advances that have transformed everything from buses to planes to tanks. Jim Allison actually helped start the Indy 500 back in 1909, not just to race cars, but to test new race car components. And that same spirit of innovation and ingenuity is what I've seen in the workers that I talked to today.

And that's why I'm so confident in this country. That's why I'm so optimistic about our economic future, because I believe in all of you. I believe in the American worker, and I believe in American business. For all the challenges we face, this country is still home to the most entrepreneurial, most industrious, most determined people on the planet. There is nothing we cannot do so long as we put our mind to it, so long as we keep our eyes on the prize.

And I'm going to keep on working with you to make sure we do that so long as I have privilege of being President of the United States.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Gregory A. Ballard of Indianapolis, IN; and Lawrence E. Dewey, chief executive officer, Allison Transmission, Inc. He also refered to the National Basketball Association's Indiana Pacers.

Remarks at Fort Campbell, Kentucky
May 6, 2011

The President. Hello, Fort Campbell! Hundred and First Airborne Division (Air Assault), hello!

General Colt, thank you for that great introduction. It was great because it was brief. [*Laughter*] More importantly, thank you for the extraordinary leadership that you've shown here at one of the largest Army bases in America.

And let me just say, I make a lot of decisions; one of the earliest and best decisions I made was choosing one of the finest Vice Presidents in our history, Joe Biden, right here.

Chaplain Miller, thank you for the beautiful invocation.

I want to thank General Colt for welcoming me here today, along with your great command sergeant major, Wayne St. Louis. Where is he? The Quartet and 101st Division Band. All these troopers behind me, you look great. [*Applause*] You noticed they kind of hesitated. [*Laughter*]

We got a lot of folks in the house. We've got military police and medical personnel. We've got the Green Berets of the 5th Special Forces Group. I think we've got a few Air Force here.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Oh—[*laughter*]. Well, we thought we did. There we go—okay. Come on. And of course, the legendary Screaming Eagles. And although they're not in the audience, I want to acknowledge the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment—the Night Stalkers—for their extraordinary service.

Now, I've got to say, some of you are starting to look a little familiar, because last December, when we were at Bagram, I was out there to thank you for your service, especially during the holidays. And we had a great rally, a big crowd. It seemed like everybody was there from the 101st.

And since then, I know we've had quite a few homecomings: the Rakkasans, Destiny, Strike, Bastogne, and some of the Division Headquarters—the Gladiators. On behalf of a grateful nation, welcome home.

Of course, our thoughts and prayers are with General Campbell, Command Sergeant Major Schroeder, and all of the Screaming Eagles and troops that are still risking their lives in theater. And I'm so pleased that Ann Campbell and Marla Schroeder and some of the inspiring military spouses are here. Where are they at? Right over there. We are grateful to you. God bless you. There they are. Thank you so much. This happens to be Military Spouse Appreciation Day, and we honor your service as well.

Now, I didn't come here to make a really long speech. I know you're hearing that. [*Laughter*] He's all, like, yes, it's hot! [*Laughter*] What I really wanted to do was come down and shake some hands. I came here for a simple reason: to say thank you on behalf of America. This has been an historic week in the life of our Nation. Thanks to the incredible skill and courage of countless individuals—intelligence, military—over many years, the terrorist leader who struck our Nation on 9/11 will never threaten America again.

Yesterday I traveled to New York City and, along with some of the 9/11 families, laid a wreath at Ground Zero in memory of their loved ones. I met with the first-responders—the firefighters, the police officers, the Port Authority officers—who lost so many of their own when they rushed into those burning towers. I promised that our Nation will never forget those we lost that dark September day.

And today, here at Fort Campbell, I had the privilege of meeting the extraordinary special ops folks who honored that promise. It was a chance for me to say on behalf of all Americans and people around the world, "Job well done." Job well done.

They're America's quiet professionals, because success demands secrecy. But I will say this. Like all of you, they could have chosen a life of ease. But like you, they volunteered. They chose to serve in a time of war, knowing they could be sent into harm's way. They trained for years. They're battle hardened.

They practiced tirelessly for this mission. And when I gave the order, they were ready.

Now, in recent days, the whole world has learned just how ready they were. These Americans deserve credit for one of the greatest intelligence and military operations in our Nation's history. But so does every person who wears America's uniform, the finest military the world has ever known. And that includes all of you, men and women of the 101st.

You've been on the frontlines of this fight for nearly 10 years. You were there in those early days, driving the Taliban from power, pushing Al Qaida out of its safe havens. Over time, as the insurgency grew, you went back for, in some cases, a second time, a third time, a fourth time.

When the decision was made to go into Iraq, you were there too, making the longest air assault in history, defeating a vicious insurgency, ultimately giving Iraqis the chance to secure their democracy. And you've been at the forefront of our new strategy in Afghanistan.

Sending you—more of you—into harm's way was the toughest decision that I've made as Commander in Chief. I don't make it lightly. Every time I visit Walter Reed, every time I visit Bethesda, I'm reminded of the wages of war. But I made that decision because I know that this mission was vital to the security of the Nation that we all love.

And I know it hasn't been easy for you, and it hasn't, certainly, been easy for your families. Since 9/11, no base has deployed more often, and few bases have sacrificed more than you. We see it in our heroic wounded warriors, fighting every day to recover and who deserve the absolute best care in the world. We see it in the mental and emotional toll that's been taken, in some cases, some good people, good soldiers who've taken their own lives. So we're going to keep saying to anybody who is hurting out there, don't give up. You're not alone. Your country needs you. We're here for you to keep you strong.

And most of all, we see the price of this war in the 125 soldiers from Fort Campbell who've made the ultimate sacrifice during this deployment to Afghanistan. And every memorial ceremony, every Eagle Remembrance, is a solemn reminder of the heavy burdens of war, but also the values of loyalty and duty and honor that have defined your lives.

So here's what each of you must know: Because of your service, because of your sacrifices, we're making progress in Afghanistan. In some of the toughest parts of the country, General Campbell and the 101st are taking insurgents and their leaders off the battlefield and helping Afghans reclaim their communities.

Across Afghanistan, we've broken the Taliban's momentum. In key regions, we've seized the momentum, pushing them out of their strongholds. We're building the capacity of Afghans, partnering with communities and police and security forces, which are growing stronger.

And most of all, we're making progress in our major goal, our central goal in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and that is disrupting and dismantling—and we are going to ultimately defeat—Al Qaida. We have cut off their head, and we will ultimately defeat them.

Even before this week's operation, we've put Al Qaida's leadership under more pressure than at any time since 9/11, on both sides of the border. So the bottom line is this: Our strategy is working, and there's no greater evidence of that than justice finally being delivered to Usama bin Laden.

But I don't want to fool you. This continues to be a very tough fight. You know that. But because of this progress, we're moving into a new phase. In the coming months, we'll start transferring responsibility for security to Afghan forces. Starting this summer, we'll begin reducing American forces. As we transition, we'll build a long-term partnership with the Afghan people so that Al Qaida can never again threaten America from that country.

And as your Commander in Chief, I'm confident that we're going to succeed in this mission. The reason I'm confident is because in you I see the strength of America's military and because in recent days, we've all seen the resilience of the American spirit.

Now, this week I received a letter from a girl in New Jersey named Payton Wall. She wrote to me on Monday after the news that bin

Laden had been killed, and she explained to me how she still remembers that September morning almost 10 years ago. She was only 4 years old. Her father Glen was trapped inside the World Trade Center. And so in those final, frantic moments, knowing he might not make it, he called home. And Payton remembers watching her mom sobbing as she spoke to her husband and then passed the phone to Payton. And in words that were hard to hear, but which she's never forgotten, she said, he said to her, "I love you Payton, and I will always be watching over you."

So yesterday Payton, her mom, and her sister Avery joined me at Ground Zero. And now Payton is 14. These past 10 years have been tough for her. In her letter, she said, "Ever since my father died, I lost a part of me that can never be replaced." And she describes her childhood as a "little girl struggling to shine through all the darkness in her life."

But every year, more and more, Payton is shining through. She's playing a lot of sports, including lacrosse and track, just like her dad. She's doing well in school. She's mentoring younger students. She's looking ahead to high school in the fall. And so yesterday she was with us, a strong, confident young woman honoring her father's memory, even as she set her sights on the future.

And for her and for all of us, this week has been a reminder of what we're about as a people. It's easy to forget sometimes, especially in times of hardship, times of uncertainty. We're coming out of the worst recession since the Great Depression, haven't fully recovered from that. We've made enormous sacrifices in two wars. But the essence of America, the values that have defined us for more than 200 years, they don't just endure, they are stronger than ever.

We're still the America that does the hard things, that does the great things. We're the nation that always dared to dream. We're the nation that's willing to take risks: revolutionaries breaking free from an empire, pioneers heading west to settle new frontiers, innovators building railways and laying the highways and putting a man on the surface of the Moon.

We are the nation—and you're the division—that parachuted behind enemy lines on D-day, freeing a continent, liberating concentration camps. We're the nation that, all those years ago, sent your division to a high school in Arkansas so that nine Black students could get an education—that was you—because we believed that all men are created equal, that everyone deserves a chance to realize their God-given potential.

We're the nation that has faced tough times before, tougher times than these. But when our Union frayed, when the Depression came, when our harbor was bombed, when our country was attacked on that September day, when disaster strikes like that tornado that just ripped through this region, we do not falter. We don't turn back. We pick ourselves up, and we get on with the hard task of keeping our country strong and safe.

See, there's nothing we can't do together, 101st, when we remember who we are, and that is the United States of America. When we remember that, no problem is too hard and no challenge is too great.

And that is why I am so confident that with your brave service, America's greatest days are still to come.

God bless you. God bless the 101st, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Jeffrey N. Colt, USA, acting senior commanding general, and Col. Alvin E. Miller, USA, chaplain, Fort Campbell; CSM Wayne P. St. Louis, USA, rear detachment command sergeant major, Maj. Gen. John F. Campbell, USA, commanding general, and CSM Scott C. Schroeder, USA, division command sergeant major, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault); Ann Campbell, wife of Maj. Gen. Campbell; Marla Schroeder, wife of CSM Schroeder; Diane Wall, mother of Payton Wall; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist

organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden and Brig. Gen. Colt.

The President's Weekly Address
May 7, 2011

Hi. I'm speaking with you today from the Allison Transmission plant at Indianapolis, Indiana. I came here because this is a place where American workers are doing some big and impressive things.

The hybrid technology they manufacture here already powers nearly 4,000 buses all over the world, buses that have already saved 15 million gallons of fuel. Soon, they'll expand this new technology to trucks as well. That means more vehicles using less oil, and that means jobs, more than 200 new workers at this plant alone.

That's important because even as the economy is growing after one of the worst recessions in our history, even as we've added more than 2 million new private sector jobs over the past 14 months, I still meet and hear from Americans struggling to get out of their own personal recessions.

A lot of folks out there are still looking for work. And many folks who do have jobs are finding that their paychecks aren't keeping up with the rising costs of everything from tuition to groceries to gas prices. In fact, in a lot of places across the country, like here in Indiana, gas has reached an alltime high.

So although our economy hasn't been the focus of the news this week, not a day that goes by that I'm not focused on your jobs, your hopes, and your dreams. And that's why I came here to Allison Transmission.

The clean energy jobs at this plant are the jobs of the future, jobs that pay well right here in America. And in the years ahead, it's clean energy companies like this one that will keep our economy growing, create new jobs, and make sure America remains the most prosperous nation in the world.

Allison Transmission is also part of the ultimate solution to high gas prices. We know there are no quick fixes to this problem. In the short term, we're doing everything we can to boost safe and responsible oil production here at home. In fact, last year, American oil production reached its highest level since 2003.

But over the long term, the only way we can avoid being held hostage to the ups and downs of oil prices is if we reduce our dependence on oil. That means investing in clean, alternative sources of energy, like advanced biofuels and natural gas. And that means making cars and trucks and buses that use less oil.

Other countries know this, and they're going all in to invest in clean energy technologies and clean energy jobs. I don't want other countries to win the competition for these technologies and these jobs. I want America to win that competition. I want America to win the future.

Now, I know that in a tough fiscal climate like the one we're in, it's tempting for some to try and cut back on our investments in clean energy. And I absolutely agree that the only way we'll be able to afford the things we need is by cutting the things we don't and living within our means. But I refuse to cut investments like clean energy that will help us outinnovate and outcompete the rest of the world. I refuse to cut investments that are making it possible for plants like this one to grow and add jobs across America.

We can do this. I don't just believe that because I see it happening in plants like this. I believe that because I believe in the Americans that are making it happen in places like this. I'm optimistic about our economic future, because for all the challenges we face, America is still home to the most entrepreneurial, most industrious, most determined people on Earth.

There's nothing we can't accomplish when we set our minds to it. And that's what we'll keep doing as long as I have the privilege of being your President.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:40 p.m. on May 6 at Allison Transmission, Inc., in Indianapolis, IN, for broadcast on May 7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 6, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on May 7.

Statement on Israeli Independence Day
May 9, 2011

Sixty-three years ago, when Israel declared its independence, the dream of a state for the Jewish people in their historic homeland was finally realized. On that same day, the United States became the first country in the world to recognize the State of Israel. As Israelis celebrate their hard-won independence, it gives me great pleasure to extend the best wishes of the American people to the people of Israel and to honor their remarkable achievements over the past six decades. Our two nations share a unique and unbreakable bond of friendship that is anchored in common interests and shared values and the United States unwavering commitment to Israel's security. I have every confidence that the strong relationship between our countries will grow deeper with each passing year.

This is a period of profound change in the Middle East and North Africa, as people across the region courageously pursue the path of dignity and self-governance. Just as I know that Israel will always be one of our closest allies, I believe that the region can be more peaceful and prosperous when its people are able to fulfill their legitimate aspirations. We will continue our efforts with Israel and others in the region to achieve a comprehensive peace, including a two-state solution, and to working together toward a future of peace, security, and dignity for the people of Israel and all the people of the region.

I offer my best wishes to President Peres, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and the people of Israel as they celebrate their 63d Independence Day.

Remarks in El Paso, Texas
May 10, 2011

The President. Hello, El Paso! Well, it is wonderful, wonderful to be back with all of you in the Lone Star State. Everything is bigger in Texas.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back! Even the welcomes are bigger. So, in appreciation, I wanted to give a big policy speech outside on a really hot day. [*Laughter*] Those of you who are still wearing your jackets, feel free to take them off. I hope everybody is wearing sunscreen. Now——

Audience member. We live here.

The President. ——you say you live here? You don't need it, huh? [*Laughter*] Well, it is a great honor to be here. And I want to express my appreciation to all of you for taking the time to come out today.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. Thank you. I appreciate it. Thank you.

You know, about a week ago, I delivered a commencement address at Miami Dade community college, which is one of the most diverse schools in the Nation. The graduates were proud that their class could claim heritage from 181 countries around the world—181 countries.

Many of the students were immigrants themselves, coming to America with little more than the dream of their parents and the clothes on their back. A handful had discov-

ered only in adolescence or adulthood that they were undocumented. But they worked hard and they gave it their all, and so they earned those diplomas.

And at the ceremony, 181 flags, one for every nation that was represented, was marched across the stage. And each one was applauded by the graduates and the relatives with ties to those countries. So when the Haitian flag went by, all the Haitian kids—Haitian American kids yelled—shouted out. And when the Guatemalan flag went by, all the kids of Guatemalan heritage shouted out. And when the Ukrainian flag went by, I think one kid shouted out. [*Laughter*] This was down in Miami. [*Laughter*] If it had been in Chicago, there would have been more.

But then, the last flag, the American flag, came into view, and everyone in the room erupted in applause. Everybody cheered. So yes, their parents and grandparents, some of the graduates themselves, had come from every corner of the globe. But it was here that they had found opportunity. It was here that they had a chance to contribute to the nation that is their home.

And it was a reminder of a simple idea, as old as America itself: *E pluribus unum*. Out of many, one. We define ourselves as a nation of immigrants, a nation that welcomes those willing to embrace America's ideals and America's precepts. That's why millions of people, ancestors to most of us, braved hardship and great risk to come here so they could be free to work and worship and start a business and live their lives in peace and prosperity: the Asian immigrants who made their way to California's Angel Island, the German and Scandinavians who settled across the Midwest, the waves of Irish and Italian and Polish and Russian and Jewish immigrants who leaned against the railing to catch their first glimpse of the Statue of Liberty.

This flow of immigrants has helped make this country stronger and more prosperous. We can point to the genius of Einstein, the designs of I.M. Pei, the stories of Isaac Asimov, the entire industries that were forged by Andrew Carnegie.

And then when I think about immigration, I think about the naturalization ceremonies that we've held at the White House for members of our military. Nothing could be more inspiring. Even though they were not yet citizens when they joined our military, these men and women signed up to serve.

We did one event at the White House, and a young man named Granger Michael from Papua New Guinea, a marine who had been deployed to Iraq three times, was there. And you know what he said about becoming an American citizen? He said: "I might as well. I love this country already." That's all he said. Marines aren't big on speeches. [*Laughter*]

Another was a woman named Perla Ramos who was born and raised in Mexico and came to the United States shortly after 9/11 and joined the Navy. And she said, "I take pride in our flag and the history we write day by day."

That's the promise of this country, that anyone can write the next chapter in our story. It doesn't matter where you come from, it doesn't matter—[*applause*]—where you come from, it doesn't matter what you look like, it doesn't matter what faith you worship. What matters is that you believe in the ideals on which we were founded, that you believe that all of us are created equal, endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. All of us deserve our freedoms and our pursuit of happiness. In embracing America, you can become American. That is what makes this country great. That enriches all of us.

And yet, at the same time, we're here at the border today—[*applause*]—we're here at the border because we also recognize that being a nation of laws goes hand in hand with being a nation of immigrants. This too is our heritage. This too is important. And the truth is, we've often wrestled with the politics of who is and who isn't allowed to come into this country. This debate is not new.

At times, there has been fear and resentment directed towards newcomers, especially in hard economic times. And because these issues touch deeply on what we believe, touch deeply on our convictions about who we are as

a people, about what it means to be an American, these debates often elicit strong emotions.

That's one reason it's been so difficult to reform our broken immigration system. When an issue is this complex, when it raises such strong feelings, it's easier for politicians to defer the problem until the next election. And there's always a next election.

So we've seen a lot of blame and a lot of politics and a lot of ugly rhetoric around immigration. And we've seen good faith efforts from leaders of both parties. By the way, I just noticed, those of you who have chairs, if you want to sit down, feel free. There's no rule about having to stand when I'm——

Audience member. We love you!

The President. But we've seen leaders of both parties who try to work on this issue, but then their efforts fell prey to the usual Washington games. And all the while, we've seen the mounting consequences of decades of inaction.

Today, there are an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants here in the United States. Some crossed the border illegally. Others avoid immigration laws by overstaying their visas. Regardless of how they came, the overwhelming majority of these folks are just trying to earn a living and provide for their families.

But we have to acknowledge they've broken the rules. They've cut in front of the line. And what is also true is that the presence of so many illegal immigrants makes a mockery of all those who are trying to immigrate legally.

Also, because undocumented immigrants live in the shadows, where they're vulnerable to unscrupulous businesses that skirt taxes and pay workers less than the minimum wage or cut corners with health and safety laws, this puts companies who follow the rules and Americans who rightly demand the minimum wage or overtime or just a safe place to work, it puts those businesses at a disadvantage.

Think about it. Over the past decade, even before the recession hit, middle class families were struggling to get by as the costs went up for everything, from health care to college tuition to groceries to gas. Their incomes didn't go up with those prices. We're seeing it again right now with gas prices.

So one way to strengthen the middle class in America is to reform the immigration system so that there is no longer a massive underground economy that exploits a cheap source of labor while depressing wages for everybody else. I want incomes for middle class families to rise again. I want prosperity in this country to be widely shared. I want everybody to be able to reach that American Dream. And that's why immigration reform is an economic imperative. It's an economic imperative.

And reform will also help to make America more competitive in the global economy. Today, we provide students from around the world with visas to get engineering and computer science degrees at our top universities.

But then our laws discourage them from using those skills to start a business or a new industry here in the United States. Instead of training entrepreneurs to stay here, we train them to create jobs for our competition. That makes no sense. In a global marketplace, we need all the talent we can attract, all the talent we can get to stay here to start businesses, not just to benefit those individuals, but because their contribution will benefit all Americans.

Look at Intel, look at Google, look at Yahoo!, look at eBay. All those great American companies, all the jobs they've created, everything that has helped us take leadership in the high-tech industry, every one of those was founded by, guess who, an immigrant.

So we don't want the next Intel or the next Google to be created in China or India. We want those companies and jobs to take root here. Bill Gates gets this. He knows a little something about the high-tech industry. He said, "The United States will find it far more difficult to maintain its competitive edge if it excludes those who are able and willing to help us compete."

So immigration is not just the right thing to do, it's smart for our economy. It's smart for our economy. And it's for this reason that businesses all across America are demanding that Washington finally meet its responsibilities to solve the immigration problem. Everybody recognizes the system is broken. The question is, will we finally summon the political will to

do something about it? And that's why we're here at the border today.

And I want to say I am joined today by an outstanding Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, who's been working tirelessly on this issue. Our Commissioner who's working diligently on border issues, Alan Bersin, is there, and we appreciate him—Bersin.

So they're doing outstanding work. And in recent years, among one of the greatest impediments to reform were questions about border security. And these were legitimate concerns. What was true was a lack of manpower and a lack of resources at the border, combined with the pull of jobs and ill-considered enforcement once folks were in the country.

All this contributed to a growing number of undocumented people living in the United States. And these concerns helped unravel a bipartisan coalition that we had forged back when I was in the United States Senate. So in the years since, "borders first, borders first," that's become the common refrain, even among those who were previously supportive of comprehensive immigration reform.

But over the last 2 years, thanks to the outstanding work of Janet and Alan and everybody who's down here working at the border, we've answered those concerns. Under their leadership, we have strengthened border security beyond what many believed was possible. They wanted more agents at the border. Well, we now have more boots on the ground on the Southwest border than at any time in our history.

The Border Patrol has 20,000 agents, more than twice as many as there were in 2004. It's a buildup that began under President Bush and that we've continued, and I had a chance to meet some of these outstanding agents and actually saw some of them on horseback who looked pretty tough. [*Laughter*] So we put the agents here.

Then they wanted a fence. Well, the fence is now basically complete. Then we've gone further. We tripled the number of intelligence analysts working at the border. I've deployed unmanned aerial vehicles to patrol the skies from Texas to California. We have forged a partnership with Mexico to fight the transnational criminal organizations that have affected both of our countries. And for the first time we're screening 100 percent of southbound rail shipments to seize guns and money going south even as we go after drugs that are coming north.

So here's the point. I want everybody to listen carefully to this. We have gone above and beyond what was requested by the very Republicans who said they supported broader reform as long as we got serious about enforcement. All the stuff they asked for, we've done. But even though we've answered these concerns, I've got to say, I suspect there are still going to be some who are trying to move the goal posts on us one more time.

You know, they said we needed to triple the Border Patrol. Or now they're going to say we need to quadruple the Border Patrol. Or they'll want a higher fence. Maybe they'll need a moat. [*Laughter*] Maybe they want alligators in the moat. [*Laughter*] They'll never be satisfied. And I understand. That's politics.

But the truth is, the measures we've put in place are getting results. Over the past 2½ years, we've seized 31 percent more drugs, 75 percent more currency, 64 percent more weapons than ever before. And even as we have stepped up patrols, apprehensions along the border have been cut by nearly 40 percent from 2 years ago. That means far fewer people are attempting to cross the border illegally.

And also, despite a lot of breathless reports that have tagged places like El Paso as dangerous, violent crime in Southwest border counties has dropped by a third. El Paso and other cities and towns along this border are consistently among the safest in the Nation. Of course, we shouldn't accept any violence or crime. And we've always got more work to do. But this progress is important, and it's not getting reported on.

And we're also going beyond the border. Beyond the border, we're going after employers who knowingly exploit people and break the law. And we are deporting those who are here illegally. And that's a tough issue. It's a source of controversy.

But I want to emphasize we're not doing it haphazardly. We're focusing our limited resources and people on violent offenders and people convicted of crimes, not just families, not just folks who are looking to scrape together an income. And as a result, we've increased the removal of criminals by 70 percent.

That's not to ignore the real human toll of a broken immigration system. Even as we recognize that enforcing the law is necessary, we don't relish the pain that it causes in the lives of people who are just trying to get by and get caught up in the system.

And as long as the current laws are on the books, it's not just hardened felons who are subject to removal, but sometimes families who are just trying to earn a living or bright, eager students or decent people with the best of intentions.

And sometimes, when I talk to immigration advocates, they wish I could just bypass Congress and change the law myself. But that's not how a democracy works. What we really need to do is to keep up the fight to pass genuine, comprehensive reform. That is the ultimate solution to this problem. That's what I'm committed to doing.

Audience member. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. Yes, we can. We can do it.

Audience members. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. The most significant step we can now take to secure the borders is to fix the system as a whole so that fewer people have the incentive to enter illegally in search of work in the first place. This would allow agents to focus on the worst threats on both of our—both sides of our borders, from drug traffickers to those who would come here to commit acts of violence or terror. That's where our focus should be.

So, El Paso, the question is whether those in Congress who previously walked away in the name of enforcement are now ready to come back to the table and finish the work that we've started. We've got to put the politics aside. And if we do, I'm confident we can find common ground.

Washington is lagging behind the country on this. There is already a growing coalition of leaders across America who don't always see eye to eye, but are coming together on this issue. They see the harmful consequences of a broken immigration system for their businesses and for their communities, and they understand why we need to act.

There are Democrats and Republicans, people like former Republican Senator Mel Martinez, former Bush administration Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, leaders like Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York, evangelical ministers like Leith Anderson and Bill Hybels, police chiefs from across the Nation, educators, advocates, labor unions, chambers of commerce, small-business owners, Fortune 500 CEOs.

I mean, one CEO had this to say about reform: "American ingenuity is a product of the openness and diversity of this society. Immigrants have made America great as the world leader in business, in science, higher education, and innovation." You know who that leader was? Rupert Murdoch, who owns FOX News and is an immigrant himself. I don't know if you're familiar with Rupert Murdoch's views, but let's just say he doesn't have an Obama sticker on his car. [*Laughter*] But he agrees with me on this.

So there is a consensus around fixing what's broken. And now we need Congress to catch up. Now we need to come together around reform that reflects our values as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants, reform that demands that everybody take responsibility. So what would comprehensive reform look like?

First, we know that Government has a threshold responsibility to secure our borders and enforce the law. And that's what Janet and all her folks are doing. That's what they're doing.

Second, businesses have to be held accountable if they exploit undocumented workers.

Third, those who are here illegally, they have a responsibility as well. So they broke the law, and that means they've got to pay their taxes, they've got to pay a fine, they've got to learn English. And they've got to undergo background checks and a lengthy process be-

fore they get in line for legalization. That's not too much to ask.

And fourth, stopping illegal immigration also depends on reforming our outdated system of legal immigration. We should make it easier for the best and the brightest to not only stay here, but also to start businesses and create jobs here. In recent years, a full 25 percent of high-tech startups in the U.S. were founded by immigrants. That led to 200,000 jobs here in America. I'm glad those jobs are here. I want to see more of them created in this country. We need to provide them the chance.

We need to provide our farms a legal way to hire workers that they rely on and a path for those workers to earn legal status. And our laws should respect families following the rules, reuniting them more quickly instead of splitting them apart.

Today, the immigration system not only tolerates those who break the rules, but it punishes folks who follow the rules. While applications—while applicants wait for approvals, for example, they're often forbidden from visiting the United States. Even husbands and wives may have to spend years apart. Parents can't see their children. I don't believe the United States of America should be in the business of separating families. That's not right. That's not who we are. We can do better than that.

And we should stop punishing innocent young people for the actions of their parents. We should stop denying them the chance to earn an education or serve in the military. And that's why we need to pass the "DREAM Act." Now, we passed the "DREAM Act" through the House last year when Democrats were in control. But even though it received a majority of votes in the Senate, it was blocked when several Republicans who had previously supported the "DREAM Act" voted no.

That was a tremendous disappointment to get so close and then see politics get in the way. And as I gave that commencement at Miami Dade, it broke my heart knowing that a number of those promising, bright students, young people who worked so hard and who speak about what's best in America, are at risk of facing the agony of deportation. These are kids who grew up in this country. They love this country. They know no other place to call home. The idea that we'd punish them is cruel. It makes no sense. We're a better nation than that.

So we're going to keep fighting for the "DREAM Act." We're going to keep up the fight for reform. And that's where you come in. I'm going to do my part to lead a constructive and civil debate on these issues. And we've already had a series of meetings about this at the White House in recent weeks. We've got leaders here and around the country helping to move the debate forward.

But this change ultimately has to be driven by you, the American people. You've got to help push for comprehensive reform, and you've got to identify what steps we can take right now—like the "DREAM Act," like visa reform—areas where we can find common ground among Democrats and Republicans and begin to fix what's broken.

So I'm asking you to add your voices to this debate. You can sign up to help at whitehouse.gov. We need Washington to know that there is a movement for reform that's gathering strength from coast to coast. That's how we'll get this done. That's how we can ensure that in the years ahead we are welcoming the talents of all who can contribute to this country and that we're living up to the basic American idea that you can make it here if you try.

That's the idea that gave hope to Jose Hernandez. Is Jose here? Where's—Jose is right over there. I want you to hear—I want you to think about this story. Jose's parents were migrant farm workers. And so growing up he was too. He was born in California, though he could have just as easily been born on the other side of the border if it had been a different time of year, because his family moved around with the seasons. So two of his siblings were actually born in Mexico.

So they traveled a lot, and Jose joined his parents picking cucumbers and strawberries. And he missed part of school when they returned to Mexico each winter. Jose didn't learn English until he was 12 years old. But you know what, Jose was good at math and he liked

math. And the nice thing is that math was the same in every school, and it's the same in Spanish as it is in English.

So Jose studied, and he studied hard. And one day, he's standing in the fields, collecting sugar beets, and he heard on a transistor radio that a man named Franklin Chang-Diaz—a man with a surname like his—was going to be an astronaut for NASA. So Jose decided—right there in the field, he decided, "Well, I could be an astronaut too."

So Jose kept on studying, and he graduated high school. And he kept on studying, and he earned an engineering degree. And he kept on studying, and he earned a graduate degree. And he kept on working hard, and he ended up at a national laboratory, helping to develop a new kind of digital medical imaging system.

And a few years later, he found himself more than 100 miles above the surface of the Earth, staring out of the window of the shuttle *Discovery*, and he was remembering the boy in the California fields with that crazy dream that in America everything is possible.

Think about that, El Paso. That's the American Dream right there. That's what we're fighting for. We are fighting for every boy and every girl like Jose with a dream and potential that's just waiting to be tapped. We are fighting to unlock that promise and all that holds not just for their futures, but for America's future. That's why we're going to get this done. And that's why I'm going to need your help.

Thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:21 p.m. at the Chamizal National Memorial. In his remarks, he referred to architect I.M. Pei; Sergey M. Brin, cofounder, Google Inc.; Jerry Yang, cofounder and former chief executive officer, Yahoo! Inc.; Pierre M. Omidyar, founder and chairman, eBay Inc.; and William H. Gates III, chairman, Microsoft, Inc.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Austin, Texas
May 10, 2011

The President. Hello, Austin! Thank you. Thank you so much. It is good to be back in Austin!

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back! I love Texas, and I especially love Austin. Love this city. It was always one of my favorite places to visit during the campaign. And I intend to drop by a few more times during this campaign.

Can everybody please give it up for Robert Earl Keen one more time? During the campaign, I was up here, I was singing with some folk, but I kept my day job. [*Laughter*]

It is wonderful to see all of you. I really do just have incredible memories of this city. This may—I think this may be the last time I took a walk, was here in Austin. It was right before a debate, and I started walking down the river, and at the time, nobody quite noticed me. [*Laughter*] And I got pretty far down from the hotel, and then somebody said, "You're Obama, aren't you?" [*Laughter*] And that was it. [*Laughter*] Secret Service started coming around and—but I had wonderful memories of this place, and I have so many good friends here. It is great to see all of you.

It is also great to be out of Washington, DC. Now, don't get me wrong, DC is a wonderful town. But the conversation in Washington——

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.*]

The President. Did somebody fall? [*Laughter*] You guys all right? Those photographers are incorrigible. [*Laughter*] The conversation you hear in Washington is just very different from the conversation you'd hear around the kitchen table or around the office coolers. And that's why we recently decided our reelection campaign will be the first one in modern history to be based out of Washington, DC. We're going back to Chicago. We are going back to Chicago. I was thinking about coming to Austin, but I had to go home.

Because I don't want our campaign to only be hearing from pundits and lobbyists and political insiders. I want our campaign to be hearing from the folks who got me to the Oval Office. I want to be hearing from you. I want to make sure we're putting the campaign in your hands, the hands of the same organizers, the same volunteers, the same ordinary people who did extraordinary things the last time around. That's what this campaign is still about.

Now, I'll confess a few things have changed since that time. A few of us are a little bit older. Some of us are a lot grayer. [*Laughter*] But all of us, I hope, can still remember that night in Grant Park, the excitement in the streets, the sense of possibility in the air. And I hope you also remember what I said back then, that that wasn't an ending, that was just the beginning. It was just the beginning of what we knew was going to be a steep climb.

Now, I confess I didn't know how steep it was going to be. [*Laughter*] It turned out we took office in the middle of the worst recession in our lifetimes, one that left millions of Americans without jobs, hundreds of thousands without homes. It was a recession that's so bad that a lot of families are still dealing with the aftershocks to this day.

And so coming in, we immediately had to take a bunch of tough decisions. And they were not always popular. But 2½ years later, an economy that was shrinking at about 6 percent is now growing again. Over the last 3 months, just the last 3 months alone, we've added about a quarter—about three-quarters of a million private sector jobs just in the last 3 months. Over the last 14 months, we've added more than 2 million private sector jobs to our economy.

Some of the things that folks said wouldn't work, they've worked. Remember our intervention in the auto industry when a whole bunch of folks were saying, let it go by the wayside? GM is now hiring back all of its workers. All of the Big Three automakers are expecting to make a profit again.

So we've made progress, but we still got some climbing to do, so don't take off your boots. [*Laughter*] Because the summit we want to reach is one where every child in America has opportunity. It's one where we're looking out for one another, whether we're poor or disabled or infirm or in our golden years. It's one where America is more prosperous then ever before and all Americans are sharing in that prosperity. That's the summit we want to reach. And it's going to take more than a couple years to get there. In fact, it's going to take more than one term to get there. It's going to take more than one term.

And I'm reminded every night when I—some of you know I get letters from all across the country, and I read 10 of them every night. And I get letters from people who are really working hard, doing everything right, but they can barely afford to keep up, barely keep their families afloat. You get a letter from somebody who has sent out 50 résumés and hasn't gotten an answer back. You get a letter from a child who says their parents are having to sell their homes: "Mr. President, is there anything you can do?"

Those are the Americans I'm thinking about every day when I wake up in the morning and every night when I go to bed. And they're the reason you elected me President. You didn't elect me President for a fancy title or a nice place to live, you elected me to bring about real change in the lives of people all across this country and make sure everybody is getting a fair shot at the American Dream. That's why you elected me.

And because of you, we've made great progress. I want you to remember that. We have made incredible progress. Sometimes, folks forget. Progress shouldn't make us complacent, but it should remind us that change is possible.

Audience member. Thank you for getting bin Laden.

The President. Well, there you go. Case in point. It should inspire us to finish what we started. Because of you, we were able to prevent a second Great Depression. But in the next few weeks, in the next few months, the next few years, we have to make sure that the new jobs and industries of our time are created right here in the United States of America. We

have to make sure that America is prepared to win the future.

Because of you, we've ended taxpayer subsidies that were going to banks under the student loan program. We're taking that money, billions of dollars, and making college more affordable for millions more students, including those right here in Austin at UT—[*applause*]—including right here.

We've raised standards for teaching and learning in schools across the country by launching something we call Race to the Top. We've got to keep on going, though. Our reforms are not done. I want every child in Texas and every child in America ready to graduate, ready to go to college, and actually able to afford going to college. That's how we're going to outcompete and outeducate the rest of the world. That's how America will succeed in the 21st century. Because of you, we made the largest investment in clean energy, renewable energy in our history, investments that are already creating new jobs and new businesses.

But we've got more work to do. Some of you may have noticed gas prices are a little high. And with all the instability around the world, we've got to keep making those investments in alternative energy. And to help pay for it, by the way, because we've got to worry about our fiscal situation, it's time to eliminate the $4 billion in taxpayer subsidies that we're giving to oil and gas companies, $4 billion of your money that they're making for record profits while you're struggling at the tank. Instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy sources, let's invest in tomorrow's energies.

Because of you, we're putting hundreds of thousands of people back to work repairing crumbling roads and bridges, our infrastructure. But now we've got to make sure America is built to compete in the 21st century—not just new roads and bridges, but high-speed rail lines and high-speed internet. We always used to have the best stuff. Texas knows something about that. But today, South Korea has faster high-speed Internet than we do. China has got high-speed rail. It doesn't have to be that way. We created the Internet. Austin knows a little bit about the high-tech industry. We should be leading the world when it comes to cutting-edge technologies and innovation.

Because of you, we did what we've been trying to do for almost a century: We said health care should no longer be a privilege, it should be a right in this country. Everybody should get affordable health care in this country. They said we couldn't get it—couldn't do it, and we did it. We said in the United States of America, you should never go broke because somebody in your family gets sick.

Because of you, we passed Wall Street reform that helps make sure you aren't cheated when you apply for a mortgage or take out a credit card, and we don't have to bail out banks anymore. We passed a law that says women should get an equal day's pay for an equal day's work. And while we were at it, we put two more women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina.

Because of you, we overturned "don't ask, don't tell" so everybody in this country can serve the country they love. We removed a hundred thousand troops from Iraq. We ended combat missions there, just like I promised we would. We're taking the fight to Al Qaida. And because of the extraordinary bravery of the men and women who wear this Nation's uniform and the outstanding work of our intelligence agencies, Usama bin Laden will never again threaten the United States of America. We couldn't be prouder of them.

But we've still got more work to do. We've still got more work to do when it comes to keeping America safe and making sure America is prosperous. We've got to move forward on a whole bunch of challenges that are still facing this Nation.

I was just down in El Paso before I came here. And we needed to——

Audience members. Whoo!

The President. Yes, it's a nice place, El Paso. [*Laughter*] And I talked about how we need to confront the challenge of immigration and pass comprehensive immigration reform that upholds our tradition as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. We can do that.

We've got to break the cycle of one energy crisis after another and bring about real energy

reform that grows our economy. I know oil is big in Texas, and that's fine. We've got as much production going on as we have since 2003 right here in the United States of America. But we only have 3 percent of the world's oil reserves; we use 25 percent of the world's oil. We're going to have to free ourselves from the grip of foreign oil, and we can clean up the planet in the process if we make the investments in basic research that are necessary. We want to leave America better off than we got.

So ultimately, that's what this budget debate in Washington is all about. It's about who we are. It's not just about numbers. It's about our values, what we care about, the kind of country we believe in.

Now, I believe in an America where Government lives within its means. We need to cut spending in Washington. We need to cut domestic spending, defense spending, health care spending, spending in our Tax Code. We've got to eliminate every dime of waste. And if we're serious about taking responsibility for the debt we owe, then we've got to make some tough decisions about the things that we can afford to do without.

We all need to share in the sacrifice, but we're not going to reduce our deficit by sacrificing the things that have always made us prosper. I'm not going to sacrifice our investment in education. I will not sacrifice scholarships to students. I will not sacrifice medical research for our scientists. I will not sacrifice our highways and our airports, making sure they're safe. I will not sacrifice investments in clean energy at a time when our dependence on foreign oil is causing folks so much pain at the pump. I'm not going to sacrifice America's future.

If we want to reduce our deficit, our sacrifice has to be shared. And that means even as we're making spending cuts, we also have to end the tax cuts to the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans in this country. It's not because we want to punish success. It's because if we're going to ask Americans to sacrifice a little bit, we can't tell millionaires and billionaires that they don't have to do a thing.

I don't want a $200,000 tax cut that's paid for by asking 33 seniors each to pay more than $6,000 in extra Medicare costs. I don't want that. I don't want my tax cut paid for by cutting kids out of Head Start or doing away with health insurance for millions of people on Medicaid, seniors in nursing homes and poor children and middle class families who are raising a child with a disability like autism. That's not a tradeoff I'm willing to make.

And I don't believe that's a tradeoff that most Americans are willing to make, no matter what party you belong to. It's not who we are as a country. We're better than that. See, what makes America great is not just the scale of our skyscrapers, the might of our military, the size of our GDP. What also makes us great is the character of our people.

We're rugged individualists, especially here in Texas. We're self-reliant. We don't like being told what to do. We believe each of us is endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights and liberties. That's part of what makes us American. We're proud of that.

But what also makes us American is the idea that we're all in it together, that I am my brother's keeper, that I am my sister's keeper, and that when I look out for somebody else, it's not out of charity. It's because my life is better. My life is richer. Because I'm driving down in Austin and I see some kids playing, I know they're in a good school. And I see some seniors taking a walk together holding hands, I know that they've got some security. And if I go by a small-business owner, I know that they've got opportunity. That's—that makes my life better, when I know that the people around me have some measure of security and dignity and a shot at the American Dream.

That's our vision of America. It's not a vision of a small America. It's a vision of a big America, a bold and optimistic America, an America that does big things. It's a vision where we're living within our means but we're still investing in our future; where everybody is making sacrifices, but nobody alone bears all the burden; where we live up to the idea that no matter who you—what you look like or who you are, no matter whether your ancestors landed on

Ellis Island or came over here on a slave ship or crossed the Rio Grande, that we're all connected to one another and that we rise or fall together.

That's the idea at the heart of America. That's the idea at the heart of this campaign. And that's why, Austin, I'm going to need your help more than ever. This campaign is still in the early stages. But now is the time where you can help shape this campaign, just like you did the first time, make sure we get out of the gate strong.

And I know there are times where some of you have felt frustrated because we haven't gotten everything done as fast as you want or exactly the way you wanted it. I know. [*Laughter*] I know those conversations you have with your friends. [*Laughter*] "Oh, why is Obama compromising with the Republicans?" "Why haven't we gotten judges appointed faster?" "Why didn't we get a public option?" You know, I know, all the grumbling. [*Laughter*]

And there are times where I get frustrated, but we knew this wasn't going to be easy. We knew that on a journey like this, there were going to be setbacks and detours and at times we would stumble. You know, I'm—I always laugh when people say, "Boy, you know, the Obama campaign back in 2008, that was just so smooth and flawless." And I'm thinking, what campaign were they looking at? [*Laughter*] We screwed up all the time during our campaign. [*Laughter*] We made mistakes. We lost all kinds of primaries and caucuses, and there were all kinds of times where I said things that I wish I hadn't or didn't say things I wish I had. That's life.

But you guys stuck with me because you knew that at each and every juncture in our history, when our future is on the line, when our country is at a crossroads, like we are now, we can come together and we can do big things. And we somehow have managed to transform ourselves from just this ragtag band of colonies to the greatest country in the world.

We took an agricultural economy and transformed it into an industrial economy, then into an information economy. And we absorbed new waves of immigrants. And we finally dealt with the stain of slavery, and we made sure that women could participate fully in our democracy. And we made sure that workers had basic rights. And we managed to do this, to move forward, not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans, as one people, as one Nation.

So whenever you hear people saying that our problems now are too big to solve or we can't bring about the change that we were talking about or, boy, politics is so nasty, whenever cynicism rears its ugly head, I want you to think about all the progress we've made already. I want you to think how unlikely it was the first time around. I want you to think about all the unfinished business that lies ahead. And I want to—I want you to remember—and I want you to remind everybody else—those three simple words that summed up our last campaign and that will sum up our spirit as a people: Yes, we can.

Thank you very much everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. God bless Texas. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:49 p.m. at the Moody Theater. In his remarks, he referred to musician Robert Earl Keen; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in West Lake Hills, Texas

May 10, 2011

Let me, first of all—I'd like to hire Alexa as my speechwriter. [*Laughter*] I don't usually get such elegant introductions. And I'm so grateful to her and Blaine and the kids for opening up this gorgeous home. And I mentioned to Alexa that I do have a doctor with me at all

times—[*laughter*]—so just in case the new one shows up early, we've got it under control. [*Laughter*] We've got it under control. Hey, we're prepared for every situation. [*Laughter*]

To the hosts who helped to set this up, thank you so much. You guys have been great friends for a long time. And I was just at Austin City Limits, an extraordinary venue. And I told folks what is the truth, which is I just love Austin, Texas. I get a good vibe coming to Austin. So post-Presidency, if I decide to come back and there's not a strong candidate for mayor—[*laughter*]—you never know. I'm a football fan too. [*Laughter*]

I want to be brief because I want to spend as much time as possible answering questions, and then I want to come to each table and make sure I say thank you personally.

Obviously, we've had an eventful week in an eventful month and an eventful couple of years. We knew when many of you got involved in the campaign back in 2008 that the country was at a crossroads and we were going to have to make some fairly consequential decisions to make sure that we were passing on a country that was worthy of its ideals.

I don't think we fully realized how dramatic some of the changes would be as we came into office. We inherited the worst recession since the Great Depression, a banking system on the verge of meltdown. We had lost 4 million jobs by the time I was sworn in and would then lose another 4 million in the few months right after I was sworn in, before our economic policies had a chance to take root.

Internationally, we've gone through a Teutonic [tectonic]* shift in the Middle East that could have enormous ramifications for years to come. And in addition to these crises, we have had to grapple with some ongoing trends in this country that frankly have made America less competitive, less just, less equitable—all the things that we talked about during the course of 2007 and 2008.

Now, and I haven't even mentioned pirates—[*laughter*]—earthquakes and the H1N1 scare. So you guys have just forgotten all this stuff. [*Laughter*] But I'm keeping a tally. [*Laughter*]

Despite crises large and small, what's been extraordinary is the progress that we've been able to make. And I could not be prouder of my team, but most importantly, I couldn't be prouder of my supporters who've hung in there during these very tumultuous times.

But think about it: We saved the country from a Great Depression. An economy that was shrinking by about 6 percent in the first quarter that I came in is now growing fairly steadily. Over the last 14 months, we've added over 2 million new jobs in the private sector here in the United States of America. Some things that folks thought would not work, like saving the auto industry, have worked. And so not only are the Big Three automakers back all the workers that were about to be laid off—so that's about a million jobs saved, all turning a profit, in some cases, the first profit they've seen in a decade—but they've now hired back all the workers that were about to be laid off. So that's about a million jobs saved just from those efforts on that front.

We managed a banking crisis in a way that taxpayers are basically getting paid almost every dime back from the interventions that we entered into. Along the way, we passed historic health care reform that had eluded us for a hundred years, and we passed financial regulatory reform. We made sure that people who love their country can serve regardless of their sexual orientation by overturning "don't ask, don't tell," got a couple of tough women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina.

We passed equal pay for equal work legislation. We made the largest investment in education in our history, but didn't just put more money in, initiating unprecedented reforms that are having ramifications all across the country. We made the largest investment in clean energy in our history and have created entire new industries like the advanced battery manufacturing industry here in the United States of America, where we look like we'll have close to a 40-percent share of the market

* White House correction.

in the next few years. Doubled our exports, ended a war, as promised, and are working another war in a place where we're going to start drawing down our troops this year and are in a position to help Afghans secure their own country.

So I'm really proud of what we've gotten done. But we've got so much more to do. We have so much more to do. And in an era where everybody wants instant gratification and people are very, very impatient, the fact of the matter is that some of these changes are going to take time. Right now, probably, the thing that folks are most worried about around the country—and rightfully so because it directly hinges on every aspect of our lives—are gas prices.

We don't have a silver bullet for gas prices. The way we're going to bring gas prices down is do some of the things that we've already done: increasing fuel efficiency standards on cars and trucks and start developing new sources of energy and promoting electric vehicles. But it's going to take some time. We're going to have to be able to sustain that effort over the next several years.

Internationally, what's happening in the Middle East is a opportunity, because frankly, it was a very dangerous situation for us to rely on a handful of autocrats to maintain stability in the region. And now we have the possibility of democracy and opportunity, but there are also enormous dangers. And how that plays itself out is going to require steady leadership over the next several years.

With respect to the economy, it is still changing in profound ways, and the unemployment rate remains way too high. And the only way we are going to make sure that we drive that unemployment rate down, but more importantly, we start driving wages and incomes back up, is if the changes we're making in education, the changes that need to be made in terms of ensuring that we have an investment in innovation and basic research that allows us to maintain our cutting edge, making sure we get a handle on our deficit in a way that reflects our values—that's going to take some time. It's going to require work.

And so that's why your presence here tonight is so important, because the main thing I want to communicate to you is not only do I think we are going to win, but also I think that what's at stake is not just Democrats being in power versus Republicans—it's not just a matter of winning or losing—what's at stake is our ability to maintain a course that keeps us headed in the right direction for decades to come.

I'll just focus on this budget issue just for one second, and then what I want to do is open it up for questions. When I came in, I had, sort of wrapped in a nice bow a trillion-dollar deficit—[*laughter*]—welcoming me. And we had accumulated trillions of dollars of debt from the previous years. This had been building up over a decade as a consequence of the Bush tax cuts, two wars that weren't paid for, and a prescription drug plan that was very expensive, but not paid for either. We then added about a trillion dollars as a consequence of reduced revenues and increased expenditures to make sure the States, for example, got help balancing their budgets, increased demand on things like unemployment insurance, and making sure that we were putting some folks back to work in this country.

We now have to get our fiscal situation under control. The debate is not just about numbers. It's about who are we, what do we believe. And the debate that we're having now in Washington is actually very instructive, and I'm glad we're having it, because Paul Ryan put forward a budget that is reflective—it is, sort of, the logical conclusion to the Republican argument that's been going on for a number of years. And essentially, what they're talking about is cutting education by 25 percent, cutting transportation spending by 30 percent, cutting clean energy investments by 70 percent, voucherizing Medicare, slashing Medicaid—fundamentally reworking our social compact.

And the consequences are not just that senior citizens would have $6,000 more in Medicare expenses every year. It's not just that a bunch of poor kids or seniors who are in nursing homes or families who have an autistic child would suddenly be without help. Even for those of us who are doing well, the conse-

quences would be that—let me just take the example of transportation. Think about cutting transportation spending by 30 percent at a time when the National Association of Engineers gives us a D in infrastructure. We've got China and India and Europe building brand new trains and bridges and ports, and we can barely fill our potholes.

And so the prospect would be a diminished, smaller, less compassionate America and a less competitive America. And that's not the vision I want for our children. I think we're better than that. That's not who we are.

And as I said at Austin City Limits, that's not because I'm particularly worried about how Malia or Sasha are going to do. Our kids will be fine. But what kind of country do we want them to live in? Do we want a country that has, sort of, the equivalent—when it comes to our infrastructure, our social safety net—the equivalent of what used to be known as third world countries? How can we look them in the eye and tell them we're passing on to you the same kind of extraordinary country that we inherited when we are shrinking our vision, our sights, in that way?

That's what this is about. That's what this election is going to be about.

Now, it's going to be tough because—I think most people are not sold on the other folks' ideas. They know they don't work. But they're worried that we have not made as much progress as quickly as they want. And that always creates volatility when it comes to the electorate.

But as I'm going around the country and talking to people, I can tell you the basic impulses of the American people: their values are strong, they are resilient; they've got good instincts. And as long as we're able to get out there and deliver our message, I'm confident we're going to be able to see this thing through.

Last weekend, obviously, Sunday was a big moment for the country, thanks to the extraordinary work of our men and women in uniform and our intelligence folks. And I visited Ground Zero, and some of you may have seen—there were some young girls there who were standing behind me when I put the wreath down. One of the young ladies was 13. She had written me a letter on Monday, an e-mail that I received, so I invited her to the ceremony.

Her father had been in the Twin Towers when the planes hit them. And she was 4 years old at the time. And she remembers her mom picking up the phone on that spectacular September day and suddenly starting to sob on the phone, and then her mother handing her the phone, and her father say, "I love you, and I'll always be looking after you." And then the phone went dead. And her mother and her witnessed the buildings go down and her father die.

And she talked about how haunted she was by that memory and described powerfully how sometimes she worries that she can't remember what her father looks like or the sound of his voice and how much it meant that justice was done.

And I think about her, and when I met her, she couldn't have been more poised and charming and smart and ready for the future. And I thought, that's who we are. We take our licks, but we keep on going. And I want to make sure that our Government is reflective of that. And I promise you I will make sure that our campaign is reflective of that spirit. And with all of your help, I'm confident that we're going to be able to keep on moving forward and deliver the kind of future for that young lady and all of our children and our grandchildren that they deserve.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:18 p.m. at the residence of Alexa and Blaine Wesner. In his remarks, he referred to Payton Wall, whose father Glen Wall was killed in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and her mother Diane. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 11. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a White House Event Celebrating Poetry
May 11, 2011

Hello, everybody. Please have a seat. Welcome to the White House. I am going to be brief because on a night like tonight my job is to get out of the way and let the professionals do their job.

I do want to start by thanking our extraordinary performers for taking time out of their busy schedules to be with us. I also want to recognize the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities for putting on this event and for everything they do to support the arts.

The power of poetry is that everybody experiences it differently. There are no rules for what makes a great poem. Understanding it isn't just about metaphor or meter. Instead, a great poem is one that resonates with us, that challenges us, and that teaches us something about ourselves and the world that we live in. As Rita Dove says, "If [poetry] doesn't affect you on some level that cannot be explained in words, then the poem hasn't done its job." Also known as, it don't mean a thing if—[*laughter*]—it ain't got that swing. That's a little ad-lib there. [*Laughter*]

For thousands of years, people have been drawn to poetry in a very personal way, including me. In the spirit of full disclosure, I actually submitted a couple of poems to my college literary magazine, and you will be pleased to know that I will not be reading them tonight. [*Laughter*]

But as a nation built on freedom of expression, poets have always played an important role in telling our American story.

It was after the bombing of Fort McHenry during the War of 1812 that a young lawyer named Francis Scott Key penned the poem that would become our national anthem. The Statue of Liberty has always welcomed the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free." Soldiers going off to fight in World War II were giving—given books of poetry for comfort and inspiration. And whenever our Nation has faced a great tragedy, whether it was the loss of a civil rights leader, the crew of a space shuttle, or the thousands of Americans that were lost on a clear September day, we've turned to poetry when we can't find quite the right words to express what we're feeling.

So tonight we continue that tradition by hearing from some of our greatest, as well as some of our newest, poets. Billy Collins, who is here with us, calls poetry "the oldest form of travel writing" because it takes us to places we can only imagine. So in that spirit, I'd like everyone to sit back, or sit on the edge of your seats, and enjoy the journey.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:14 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former United States Poets Laureate Rita F. Dove and William J. Collins.

Remarks at the National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast
May 12, 2011

Thank you so much. Well, good morning. This is just an extraordinary gathering. I have to say to Reverend Cortes and all the other organizers of this prayer breakfast, I think it's getting bigger, huh? I think this thing is growing.

I just want to thank Reverend Cortes. I just got a extraordinary gift, a bilingual Bible. It is beautiful. I was told this will help improve my Spanish. [*Laughter*] And I said, "I'll pray on it." [*Laughter*] Amen.

To all the clergy, lay leaders, administration officials, and distinguished guests who are here today, it is an extraordinary pleasure to join you. We've had a number of prayer breakfasts over the past several months, and I've got to say, there is no more inspiring way to begin a day

than by praying with fellow believers. And so I'm grateful to all of you to give me this opportunity.

I also know that these past few days have not only been a time of prayer and a time of reflection for all of you, they've also been a time to lend your voices to the causes that you're passionate about. And I want you to know that I'm listening. When you lend your voice to the cause of creating jobs and opening opportunity for all communities, I hear you. When you lend your voice to the cause of educating all of our children, not just some, to succeed in the 21st century, I'm listening. And when you lend your voice to the cause of immigration reform, I am listening.

As some of you probably heard, I flew down to El Paso a couple of days ago to give a speech on this topic. And what I said in that speech was that we define ourselves as a nation of immigrants, as a nation that's open to anyone who's willing to embrace America's precepts and America's ideals. That's why so many men and women have braved hardship and great risk to come here, picking up and leaving behind the world that they knew, carrying nothing but the hope that here in America, their children might live a better life.

Our heritage as a nation of immigrants is part of what has always made America strong. "Out of many, one"—that is our creed. And we are also a nation of laws—a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws. And what I went down to El Paso to say is that we are enforcing our laws and we're securing our borders. In fact, we have more manpower down at the Southwest border than at any time in our history.

And so what we need to do going forward is to address some of the broader problems in our immigration system. And that means changing minds and changing votes, one at a time. I know there are some folks who wish I could just bypass Congress. [*Laughter*] I can't. But what I can do is sign a law. What you can do is champion a law. What we can do together is make comprehensive immigration reform the law of the land. That's what we can do.

Comprehensive reform is not only an economic imperative or a security imperative, it's also a moral imperative. It's a moral imperative when kids are being denied the chance to go to college or serve their military because of the actions of their parents. It's a moral imperative when millions of people live in the shadows and are made vulnerable to unscrupulous businesses or with nowhere to turn if they are wronged. It's a moral imperative when simply enforcing the law may mean inflicting pain on families who are just trying to do the right thing by their children.

So yes, immigration reform is a moral imperative, and so it's worth seeking greater understanding from our faith. As it is written in the Book of Deuteronomy, "Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." To me, that verse is a call to show empathy to our brothers and our sisters, to try and recognize ourselves in one another.

And it's especially important that we try to do that when it comes to immigration, because this is a subject that can expose raw feelings and feed our fears of change. It can be tempting to think that those coming to America today are somehow different from us. And we need to not have amnesia about how we populated this country. What this verse reminds us to do is to look at that migrant farmer and see our own grandfather disembarking at Ellis Island or Angel Island in San Francisco Bay and to look at that young mother, newly arrived in this country, and see our own grandmothers leaving Italy or Ireland or Eastern Europe in search of something better.

That sense of connection, that sense of empathy, that moral compass, that conviction of what is right, is what led the National Association of Evangelicals to shoot short films to help people grasp the challenges facing immigrants. It's what led the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to launch a Justice for Immigrants campaign and the Interfaith Immigration Coalition to advocate across religious lines. It's what led all the Latino pastors at the Hispanic Prayer Breakfast to come together around reform.

Ultimately, that's how change will come. At critical junctures throughout our history, it's often been men and women of faith who've helped to move this country forward. It was

our—in our Episcopal churches of Boston that our earliest patriots planned our Revolution. It was in the Baptist churches of Montgomery and Selma that the civil rights movement was born. And it's in the Catholic and Evangelical and mainline churches of our Southwest and across our entire continent that a new movement for immigration reform is taking shape today.

So I'll keep doing my part. I'll keep pushing and working with Congress. But the only way we are going to get this done is by building a widespread movement for reform. That's why I'm asking you to keep preaching and persuading your congregations and communities. That's why I'm asking you to keep on activating, getting involved, mobilizing. That's why we all need to keep praying. I'm asking you to help us recognize ourselves in one another. And if you can do that, I'm absolutely confident that we will not only make sure America remains true to its heritage as a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws, but we'll make sure we remain true to our founding ideals and that we build a beloved community here on this Earth.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:29 a.m. at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Luis Cortes, Jr., founder and president, Esperanza, who introduced the President.

Remarks at a Ceremony Honoring the National Association of Police Organizations TOP COPS
May 12, 2011

The President. Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody. Please, everybody have a seat.

Thank you, Joe, not just for being a great Vice President, but being one of law enforcement's best friends and strongest advocates over the years. I think they've gotten even more love from you than the railroads—[*laughter*]—and that's hard to do.

I look forward to this event every single year. I can't tell you how much I appreciate the efforts of law enforcement officials nationwide, not just because I've got several around me 24 hours a day. I have had the special honor of meeting police officers and law enforcement officials in all 50 States. Last week, I had the special honor of visiting with the men and women of New York City's First Precinct, which was the first to respond on 9/11 and serves the area encompassing Ground Zero.

And what I told them is the same thing that I'll tell all of the law enforcement professionals here today: Thank you. We appreciate your service. You have our support. We're grateful for the sacrifices you and your families make, and my administration is committed to making sure that you get what you need.

Some of the public servants helping us do that today are here: Our excellent Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano; our Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Gil Kerlikowske, is here—[*applause*]—a longtime police officer who also served as police chief in four different cities.

I'd also like to say that today I am seeking a 2-year extension for FBI Director Bob Mueller. And in his 10 years at the FBI, Bob has set the gold standard for leading the Bureau. He's improved the working relationship with local law enforcement across the country. And I hope that Democrats, led by Judiciary Chairman Pat Leahy, who's here, as well as Republicans in Congress will join together in extending that leadership for the sake of our Nation's safety and security.

We've also got several elected officials here today, and I'm grateful for their service and their support of law enforcement. And obviously, I want to welcome the leaders of the National Association of Police Organizations, including your president, Tom Nee, and your executive director, William Johnson.

And most importantly, congratulations to the 30 officers, sheriffs, detectives, investigators, agents who are behind me, our Nation's TOP COPS, right here.

Audience members. [*Inaudible*]

The President. We've got the Montana crew hollering. [*Laughter*] That was Missoula, right? [*Applause*] There you go, Missoula.

I know the families are bursting with pride for your loved ones' accomplishments, but your love and support has had a lot to do with those accomplishments. So again, we are grateful to you.

This is the third year I've had the honor of welcoming America's TOP COPS to the White House. It's kind of like the Heisman Trophy presentation for law enforcement. But I just spent a little time with these men and women inside, and I can tell you with certainty, they carry themselves with such humility. They don't say to themselves: "This is it. This year I made TOP COP. I'm going to train, put in long hours, and go to Washington and stand with the President." That's not why they do what they do every single day.

None of them put together a PR package for our consideration. Some of them are still recovering from gunshot wounds suffered in the line of duty. Some have heavy hearts for partners who've been lost, and they commit themselves to their memory. And all would put forward others in their units who they would say are just as brave or just as dedicated or just as capable or just as deserving of this recognition.

But, you know, a moment came when their actions earned recognition. It wasn't talk, it was what they did. They didn't know it that morning as they pinned on a badge or strapped on a vest or holstered a weapon. But that day, something would happen that would make them worthy of this honor, whether it was a random act of bravery or a successful outcome that was the results of months or even years of painstaking and dangerous police work.

The men and women we honor today have responded with courage under withering fire to defend the innocent. They've skillfully rescued women and children from armed gang members and have saved the life of a shooting victim when there wasn't time for paramedics to arrive. They've carried out a dangerous and deadly sting operation to get drugs off the streets. They've burst into a white-hot building to save paralyzed senior citizens whose beds were engulfed in flames. They've doggedly pursued an 18-year-old cold case until justice was done. And they've investigated last year's attempted Times Square bombing, successfully extracting a full confession and a wealth of actionable intelligence leading to arrests that have made this country safer.

Think about the strong stuff that takes. Think about the character it takes to refuse to close the books on a case forgotten by all but the victims' families, the coolness it takes to talk down an armed and hostile criminal, the courage it takes to run into flames or press forward through a hail of bullets when every natural instinct would say: Stop. Think about yourself. Survive.

They'll be the first to say that they've been trained to do it. Some of them will argue they're not heroes. They'll tell you a badge doesn't bestow courage, that special training or physical strength doesn't make you braver, that heroism isn't something made evident only after the chaos of a firefight. I think when you talk to most of these guys, they'll say heroism lies just as much in the action of their fellow officers and the hearts of the fellow citizens they've sworn to protect.

And it's true, heroism is all around us, inside of all of us, just waiting to be summoned. But I tell you what, when gunshots ring out and fires burn hot, when injustice goes unanswered and innocent people cry out for help, it's one thing to talk about courage, it's another thing to respond swiftly, decisively, heroically, with little regard for yourself and complete regard for your fellow man.

And these are the men and women who actually responded. These are America's TOP COPS, who protect and who serve, who walk the beat, who answer the call and do the dangerous and difficult work of forging a safer, stronger America, block by block and neighborhood by neighborhood.

So each of you deserves this moment in the sun, and it is sunny. [*Laughter*] Because tomorrow we know that you and your fellow first-responders will be back on your diligent duty, looking out for us, looking out for one another, looking back at times with fallen partners, determined to make sure that their extraordinary sacrifices were not in vain. And we will be standing behind you, as one Nation and one people, proud of your actions, awed by your courage, and grateful for your service on our behalves.

So to all of you and to all who wear the badge, thank you for keeping us safe. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. We're going to knock down this podium, and let's take a picture with America's TOP COPS.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden. The related proclamation of May 13 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Resignation of United States Special Envoy for Middle East Peace George J. Mitchell
May 13, 2011

Over the past 2½ years, George Mitchell has worked as a tireless advocate for peace as the U.S. Special Envoy for the Middle East. His deep commitment to resolving conflict and advancing democracy has contributed immeasurably to the goal of two states living side by side in peace and security.

George told me when he took this job that he would put in a couple of years, and I'm so glad he did. He is, by any measure, one of the finest public servants that our Nation has ever had. Even though he already had an extraordinary legacy—serving the people of Maine, leading the Senate, and bringing peace to Northern Ireland—he took on the toughest job imaginable and worked grueling hours to advance the interests of the United States and the cause of peace.

As he returns to his family, George leaves behind a proud legacy of dedicated public service, and the country owes him a debt of gratitude for his extraordinary commitment.

As a nation, we remain committed to peace in the Middle East and to building on George's hard work and progress toward achieving this goal. Secretary Clinton has asked the Deputy Middle East Envoy, David Hale, to serve as the Acting Envoy, and I have every confidence in David's ability to continue to make progress in this important effort.

NOTE: The statement released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included a statement by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Ambassador Mitchell's resignation and the full text of the resignation letter submitted to the President by Ambassador Mitchell.

Statement on Senator Herbert H. Kohl's Decision Not To Seek Reelection
May 13, 2011

Today I called Senator Herb Kohl to thank him for his remarkable career in public service.

During his 23 years in the United States Senate, Herb's invaluable perspective as the long-time head of a family-owned business made him an unwavering voice for working families, small-business owners, and seniors.

America's children will grow up in a better place thanks to his advocacy on behalf of childhood nutrition programs, a strengthened food safety system, access to affordable health care and childcare, and juvenile crime prevention.

Herb's dedication to American families and businesses remains evident today in the robust

farming and manufacturing sector he helped foster in his home State of Wisconsin. And he has been a constant advocate to ensure that seniors in Wisconsin and across the country have access to affordable prescription drugs.

Michelle and I extend our thanks to Senator Kohl for his years of service to our Nation and offer our best wishes for the future to him and his family.

The President's Weekly Address
May 14, 2011

Recently, there have been signs that the economy is picking up steam. Last month, we saw the strongest job growth in 5 years and have added more than three-quarters of a million private sector jobs in just 3 months. But there are still too many Americans who are either looking for work or struggling to pay the bills and make the mortgage. Paychecks aren't getting any bigger, but the cost of everything from groceries to college tuition keeps on rising.

Without a doubt, one of the biggest burdens over the last few months has been the price of gasoline. In many places, gas is now more than $4 a gallon, meaning that you could be paying more than $60 to fill up your tank. These spikes in gas prices are often temporary, and while there are no quick fixes to the problem, there are a few steps we should take that make good sense.

First, we should make sure that no one is taking advantage of consumers at the pump. That's why we've launched a task force led by the Attorney General that has one job: rooting out cases of fraud or manipulation in the markets that might affect gas prices, including any illegal activity by traders and speculators.

Second, we should increase safe and responsible oil production here at home. Last year, America's oil production reached its highest level since 2003. But I believe that we should continue to expand oil production in America, even as we increase safety and environmental standards.

To do this, I'm directing the Department of Interior to conduct annual lease sales in Alaska's National Petroleum Reserve, while respecting sensitive areas, and to speed up the evaluation of oil and gas resources in the Mid- and South Atlantic. We plan to lease new areas in the Gulf of Mexico as well and work to create new incentives for industry to develop their unused leases both on and offshore.

We're also taking steps to give companies time to meet higher safety standards when it comes to exploration and drilling. That's why my administration is extending drilling leases in areas of the Gulf that were impacted by the temporary moratorium, as well as certain areas off the coast of Alaska. And to streamline that permitting process, I'm establishing a new team to coordinate work on Alaska drilling permits.

Finally, the third step we should take is to eliminate the taxpayer subsidies we give to oil and gas companies. In the last few months, the biggest oil companies made about $4 billion in profits each week. And yet they get $4 billion in taxpayer subsidies each year. Four billion dollars at a time when Americans can barely fill up their tanks. Four billion dollars at a time when we're trying to reduce our deficit.

This isn't fair; it makes no sense. Before I was President, the CEOs of these companies even admitted that the tax subsidies made no sense. Well, next week, there's a vote in Congress to end these oil company giveaways once and for all. And I hope Democrats and Republicans come together and get this done.

The American people shouldn't be subsidizing oil companies at a time when they're making near-record profits. As a nation, we should be investing in the clean, renewable sources of energy that are the ultimate solution to high gas prices. That's why we're investing in clean energy technology, helping businesses that manufacture solar panels and wind turbines, and making sure that our cars and trucks can go further on a tank of gas, a step that could save families as much as $3,000 at the pump.

These are investments worth making, investments that will save us money, reduce

our dependence on foreign oil, and protect the health and safety of our planet. That's an energy policy for the future, and it's what I'll be fighting for in the weeks and months to come.

Thanks.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:05 p.m. on May 13 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on May 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 13, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on May 14.

Remarks to Booker T. Washington High School's Senior Class in Memphis, Tennessee
May 16, 2011

The President. Hello everybody. It's good to see you guys. Hello, hello. So how's everybody doing? You guys doing good? How's everybody doing? You're all kind of excited about graduating, huh? Well, listen, I just had a chance to meet your principal and these two outstanding classmates of yours, and I just want to say how inspired we were. We were inspired by the video you sent. We're inspired by the stories you told. We're inspired by how you've turned this school around. Now, obviously, a lot of that has to do with your outstanding principal, and we are proud of her.

She says you guys know how old she is. How old is she?

Students. Twenty-five!

The President. Twenty-five. She started when she was 7, as a child prodigy—[*laughter*]—teaching high school at 7 years old. [*Laughter*]

Obviously, it has a lot to do with great teachers, but this is mainly your day and your success, because a lot of you—and I'm going to talk about this at the commencement—a lot of you had to struggle to get here. Most of you weren't born with a silver spoon in your mouth. But what you've shown is determination. What you've shown is character. What you've shown is a willingness to work hard and the ability to steer clear of folks that were trying to send you down the wrong path. And so as a consequence, you've now become role models for all the young people coming up behind you. You've become an inspiration to the city and the State of Tennessee and the country.

So I just wanted you all to know, you inspire me. That's why I'm here. I could not be prouder of what you do. But I've still got some big, big expectations for you, so don't think just because you graduate from high school that that's it. You've got a lot more work to do, because I expect all of you to be leaders in this community and communities all across the country. And this is just the beginning. This is not the end. All right?

So God bless you guys. I'm so excited to be here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. at the Memphis Cook Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Alisha Kiner, principal, and Christopher Dean and Cassandra Henderson, students, Booker T. Washington High School.

Commencement Address at Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis
May 16, 2011

The President. Thank you very much, everybody. Everybody, please have a seat. Thank you, Chris. Hello, Memphis. Congratulations to the class of 2011!

Now, I will admit, being President is a great job. [*Laughter*] I have a very nice plane. [*Laughter*] I have a theme song. [*Laughter*] But what I enjoy most is having a chance to come to a school like Booker T. Washington High School and share this day with its graduates. So I could not be more pleased to be here.

We've got some wonderful guests who are here as well, and I just want to make mention of them very quickly. First of all, the Governor of Tennessee, Bill Haslam, is here. Please give him a big round of applause. Three outstanding members of the Tennessee congressional delegation, all of whom care deeply about education: Senator Bob Corker, Senator Lamar Alexander, and Congressman Steve Cohen is here. You've got one of Memphis's own, former Congressman Harold Ford, Jr., is in the house. And the mayor of Memphis, A.C. Wharton, is here. Please give him a big round of applause.

I am so proud of each and every one of you.

Student. Thank you!

The President. You're welcome. You made it, and not just through high school. You made it past Principal Kiner. [*Laughter*] Now, I've spent a little bit of time with her now, and you can tell she is not messing around. [*Laughter*] I've only been in Memphis a couple hours, but I'm pretty sure that if she told me to do something, I'd do it. [*Laughter*]

Then I had the chance to meet her mom and her daughter Amber a little while back, and we took a picture. It turns out, Amber actually goes to another high school. She was worried that the boys would be afraid to talk to her if her mom was lurking in the hallways—[*laughter*]—which is why my next job will be principal at Sasha and Malia's high school. [*Laughter*] And then I'll be president of their college. [*Laughter*]

Let me also say to Alexis and Vashti, I heard that you were a little nervous about speaking today, but now I'm a little nervous speaking after you because you both did terrific jobs. We've had some great performances by Shalonda and Tecia and Paula and the jazz band. Give them a big round of applause.

Last but not least, I want to recognize all the people who helped you to reach this milestone: the parents, the grandparents, the aunts, the uncles, the sisters, the brothers, the friends, the neighbors who have loved you and stood behind you every step of the way. Congratulations, family.

And I want to acknowledge the devoted teachers and administrators at Booker T. Washington, who believed in you, who kept the heat on you, and have never treated teaching as a job, but rather as a calling.

Now, every commencement is a day of celebration. I was just telling somebody backstage, I just love commencements. I get all choked up at commencements. So I can tell you already right now, I will cry at my children's commencement. I cry at other people's commencements. [*Laughter*] But this one is especially hopeful. This one's especially hopeful because some people say that schools like BTW just aren't supposed to succeed in America. You'll hear them say: "The streets are too rough in those neighborhoods. The schools are too broken. The kids don't stand a chance."

We are here today because every single one of you stood tall and said, "Yes, we can." Yes, we can learn. Yes, we can succeed. You decided you would not be defined by where you come from, but by where you want to go, by what you want to achieve, by the dreams you hope to fulfill.

Just a couple of years ago, this was a school where only about half the students made it to graduation. For a long time, just a handful headed to college each year. But at Booker T. Washington, you changed all that.

You created special academies for ninth graders to start students off on the right track. You made it possible for kids to take AP classes and earn college credits. You even had a team take part in robotics competition so students can learn with their hands by building and creating. And you didn't just create a new curriculum, you created a new culture, a culture that prizes hard work and discipline, a culture that shows every student here that they matter and that their teachers believe in them. As Principal Kiner says, "The kids have to know that you care before they care what you know."

And because you created this culture of caring and learning, today we're standing with a very different Booker T. Washington High School. Today this is a place where more than four out of five students are earning a diploma, a place where 70 percent of the graduates will

continue their education, where many will be the very first in their families to go to college.

Today Booker T. Washington is a place that has proven why we can't accept excuses—any excuses—when it comes to education. In the United States of America, we should never accept anything less than the best that our children have to offer.

As your teacher Steve McKinney—where's Steve at? There he is—a.k.a. Big Mac. [*Laughter*] And I see why they call you Big Mac. [*Laughter*] As Mr. McKinney said in the local paper, "We need everyone to broaden their ideas about what is possible. We need parents, politicians, and the media to see how success is possible, how success is happening every day."

So that's why I came here today. Because if success can happen here at Booker T. Washington, it can happen anywhere in Memphis. And if it can happen in Memphis, it can happen anywhere in Tennessee. And if it can happen anywhere in Tennessee, it can happen all across America.

So ever since I became President, my administration has been working hard to make sure that we build on the progress that's taking place in schools like this. We've got to encourage the kind of change that's led not by politicians, not by Washington, DC, but by teachers and principals and parents and entire communities, by ordinary people standing up and demanding a better future for their children.

We have more work to do so that every child can fulfill his or her God-given potential. And here in Tennessee, we've been seeing great progress. Tennessee has been a leader, one of the first winners of the nationwide Race to the Top that we've launched to reward the kind of results you're getting here at Booker T. Washington.

And understand, this isn't just an issue for me. I'm standing here as President because of the education that I received. As Chris said, my father left my family when I was 2 years old. And I was raised by a single mom, and sometimes she struggled to provide for me and my sister. But my mother, my grandparents, they pushed me to excel. They refused to let me make excuses. And they kept pushing me, especially on those rare occasions where I'd slack off or get into trouble. They weren't that rare, actually. [*Laughter*] I'm sure nobody here has done anything like that. [*Laughter*]

I'm so blessed that they kept pushing, I'm so lucky that my teachers kept pushing because education made all the difference in my life. The same is true for Michelle; education made such a difference in her life. And Michelle's dad was a city worker, had multiple sclerosis, had to wake up every day, and it took him a couple hours just to get ready for work. But he went to work every day. Her mom was a secretary, went to work every day, and kept on pushing her just like my folks pushed me.

That's what's made a difference in our lives. And it's going to make an even greater difference in your lives, not just for your own success, but for the success of the United States of America. Because we live in a new world now. Used to be that you didn't have to have an education. If you were willing to work hard, you could go to a factory somewhere and get a job. Those times are passed. Believe it or not, when you go out there looking for a job, you're not just competing against people in Nashville or Atlanta, you're competing against young people in Beijing and Mumbai. That's some tough competition. Those kids are hungry. They're working hard. And you'll need to be prepared for it.

And as a country, we need all of our young people to be ready. We can't just have some young people successful. We've got to have every young person contributing, earning those high school diplomas and then earning those college diplomas or getting certified in a trade or a profession. We can't succeed without it.

Through education, you can also better yourselves in other ways. You learn how to learn, how to think critically and find solutions to unexpected challenges. I remember, we used to ask our teachers, "Why am I going to need algebra?" Well, you may not have to solve for x to get a good job or to be a good parent, but you will need to think through tough problems. You'll need to think on your feet. You'll need to know how to gather facts and evaluate information. So, math teachers, you can tell

your students that the President says they need algebra. [*Laughter*]

Education also teaches you the value of discipline, that the greatest rewards come not from instant gratification, but from sustained effort and from hard work. This is a lesson that's especially true today, in a culture that prizes flash over substance, that tells us that the goal in life is to be entertained, that says you can be famous just for being famous. I mean, you get on a reality show, don't know what you've done, suddenly, you're famous. But that's not going to lead to lasting, sustained achievement.

And finally, with the right education, both at home and at school, you can learn how to be a better human being. For when you read a great story or you learn about an important moment in history, it helps you imagine what it would be like to walk in somebody else's shoes, to know their struggles. The success of our economy will depend on your skills, but the success of our community will depend on your ability to follow the Golden Rule, to treat others as you would like to be treated.

We've seen how important this is even in the past few weeks as communities here in Memphis and all across the South have come together to deal with floodwaters and to help each other in the aftermath of terrible tornadoes.

All of these qualities—empathy, discipline, the capacity to solve problems, the capacity to think critically—these skills don't just change how the world sees us, they change how we see ourselves. They allow each of us to seek out new horizons and new opportunities with confidence, with the knowledge that we're ready, that we can face obstacles and challenges and unexpected setbacks. That's the power of your education. That's the power of the diploma that you receive today.

And this is something that Booker T. Washington himself understood. Think about it. He entered this world a slave on a Southern plantation. But he would leave this world as the leader of a growing civil rights movement and the president of the world-famous Tuskegee Institute.

Booker T. Washington believed that change and equality would be won in the classroom. So he convinced folks to help him buy farmland. Once he had the land, he needed a school. So he assigned his first students to actually build the chairs and the desks and even a couple of the classrooms. You thought your teachers were tough.

Booker T. Washington ran a tight ship. He'd ride the train to Tuskegee and scare some of the new students. This is before YouTube and TMZ, so the kids didn't recognize him. [*Laughter*] He'd walk up to them and say: "Oh, you're heading to Tuskegee. I heard the work there is hard. I heard they give the students too much to do. I hear the food is terrible. You probably won't last 3 months." But the students would reply, they weren't afraid of hard work. They were going to complete their studies no matter what Booker T. Washington threw at them. And in that way, he prepared them, because life will throw some things at you.

The truth is, not a single one of the graduates here today has had it easy. Not a single one of you had anything handed to you on a silver platter. You had to work for it. You had to earn it. Most of all, you had to believe in yourselves.

I think of Chris's stories and what he's faced in his life: lost his father to violence at the age of 4, had a childhood illness that could have been debilitating. But somehow, he knew in his heart that he could take a different path.

I think of all the graduates here who had to leave their homes when their apartments were torn down, but who took two buses each morning to come back to Booker T. Washington.

I think of Eron Jackson. Where is Eron? Eron's known a lot of setbacks in her young life. There was a period when she lashed out and she got into trouble and she made mistakes. And when she first came to Booker T. Washington, she struggled. Is that right? There are plenty of people out there who would have counted Eron out, a lot of people who would have thought of her as another statistic. But that's not how the teachers here at Booker T. Washington saw her. And that's not how Eron

came to see herself. So she kept coming back to school, and she didn't give up, and she didn't quit. And in time, became—she became a great student.

And she remembered what Principal Kiner told her: "You can't let the past get you down. You have to let it motivate you." And so now here Eron is, graduating. She's going to keep studying to get her barber's certificate so she can cut hair and save for college. She's working toward her dream to becoming a lawyer. She's got a bright future.

Everybody here has got a unique story like that to tell. Each of you knows what it took for you to get here. But in reaching this milestone, there is a common lesson shared by every graduate in this hall, and Chris said it himself in a recent interview: "It's not where you are or what you are. It's who you are."

Yes, you're from South Memphis. Yes, you've always been underdogs. Nobody has handed you a thing. But that also means that whatever you accomplish in your life, you will have earned it. Whatever rewards and joys you reap, you'll appreciate them that much more because they will have come through your own sweat and tears, products of your own effort and your own talents. You've shown more grit and determination in your childhoods than a lot of adults ever will. That's who you are.

So, class of 2011, the hard road does not end here. Your journey has just begun. Your diploma is not a free pass. It won't protect you against every setback or challenge or mistake. You'll make some, I promise. You're going to have to keep working hard. You're going to have to keep pushing yourselves. And you'll find yourselves sometime in situations where folks have had an easier time, they're a little bit ahead of you, and you're going to have to work harder than they are. And you may be frustrated by that.

But if you do push yourselves, if you build on what you've already accomplished here, then I couldn't be more confident about your futures. I'm hopeful and I'm excited about what all of you can achieve. And I know that armed with the skills and experience and the love that you've gained at Booker T. Washington High School, you're ready to make your mark on the world.

So thank you. Thanks for inspiring me. God bless you. God bless the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:18 p.m. at the Memphis Cook Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Alisha Kiner, principal, Christopher Dean, Alexis Wilson, and Vashti Taylor, students, Shalonda D. Williams, graduation coach, Tecia Marshall, teacher, and Paula Hollins, secretary, Booker T. Washington High School; and Clara Coleman, mother of Principal Kiner. He also referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng and his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Remarks Honoring the NCAA Men's Basketball Champion University of Connecticut Huskies
May 16, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody! Welcome. Please, have a seat. Have a seat. Welcome to the White House, and congratulations to the Huskies on being the best college basketball team in the land.

Before we start, I want to acknowledge a big Huskies fan that's in the house: Senator Joe Lieberman is here. I know he is proud of this team.

I have to be honest, this is a bittersweet day for me. [*Laughter*] On the one hand, I get to congratulate a great team and a great coach on winning the national championship. On the other hand, I'm reminded once again that my bracket was a bust. [*Laughter*] I did not pick UConn to win it all. That was a big mistake. [*Laughter*] I was just mentioning to Coach that it was because Andy Katz of ESPN told me there's no way UConn was winning. [*Laughter*] I did have these guys going to the Elite Eight, and I was doing pretty well in my pool at the

beginning of the tournament, and then things completely fell apart.

But I was not alone. Let's face it, this was a tough year for a lot of brackets because teams like this one shocked the world. So next time you guys decide to reel off 11 straight wins, please let me know ahead of time. [*Laughter*]

Because the truth is, UConn's perfect run through the Big East and the NCAA tournament was a surprise to everybody but themselves and Coach. These guys knew they had something special. And even though they finished the regular season tied for ninth in the Big East, even though there were some rough spots during the season, these players just put their heads down, they worked hard, and they focused on winning the games that counted.

They succeeded because everybody knew that they had a role to play. There was, of course, Coach Calhoun, who now joins John Wooden, Adolph Rupp, and Mike Krzyzewski and Bobby Knight as the only coaches ever to win three national championships. That's pretty good company there, Coach.

There's Shabazz Napier, who sang and danced and talked his way through a incredible freshman season. [*Laughter*] If he's making rabbit ears behind me or anything like that, please stop him. [*Laughter*]

At the other end of the spectrum there's Jeremy Lamb. He's sort of the anti-Shabazz. [*Laughter*] He's quiet. [*Laughter*] But he lets his play do the talking and exploded to average 15 points a game during the postseason.

And then there's Kemba Walker, who—[*applause*]—this is a guy who wanted to go to UConn so badly in high school that he recruited them—never afraid to take a last shot, a player who will go down in history as one of the greatest ever to wear the Huskies uniform, and a player who always lived by his dad's advice that "it's not the size of the person, it's the size of the heart."

So if you put all that together—young team, long-shot odds and then a postseason run, and the Kemba show—that was a pretty inspiring season.

I want to thank all the players, all the coaches who held the basketball clinic earlier this afternoon and inspiring some future stars here from DC. I think you made their year. And I want to thank everybody who is involved in the UConn family, because obviously, this has been a great program for many, many years, Coach. And I know that you could not do it without all the folks who are represented here today: assistant coaches, trainers, folks in the athletic department, everybody who has been so supportive of this outstanding, outstanding program.

So congratulations to all of you. Hopefully, we will see you again soon. You got a bunch of freshmen, so I don't see why these guys couldn't go on a pretty good run here. But we couldn't be prouder of them, and I know that the great State of Connecticut couldn't be prouder of them as well.

So congratulations.

Coach James C. Calhoun. Well, thank you, Mr. President. As you know, Kemba was waiting for you—when you were up in the air, he was down on the ground, because—unfortunately, he actually was up in the air stuck at LaGuardia Airport for 3 hours. But he did want that one-on-one game with you.

The President. I'm ready. [*Laughter*]

Coach Calhoun. Does he have enough game, you think?

The President. As long as he's wearing street shoes and a suit. [*Laughter*]

Coach Calhoun. I like a guy with edges. [*Laughter*] President and folks, I just want to say it's a thrill for us to be here representing the State of Connecticut, certainly the University of Connecticut. Joe Lieberman was there a long time ago before we started going to the White House occasionally.

The President. It was a really long time ago. [*Laughter*]

Coach Calhoun. Matter of fact—no, we'll get into that at another time. But it's been a thrill. This year was reminding me in many, many ways, between my wife and myself, rooting you on. We stopped with the team at the Lincoln Memorial, and I know how much you admired Lincoln.

I was telling our kids just when great things happen, like—I happened to be buying some

bookmarkers for the kids that you might recognize.

The President. Absolutely.

Coach Calhoun. And I said simply that people like Lincoln and Martin Luther King and so on, maybe our President, were speeding along in the process of being something special that he truly is. And I believe that and feel that way.

This basketball team, by the way, was kind of an underdog, much as you were. And who would have thought, 15 years ago—who would have thought maybe 9 months ago we would be here.

But you know what? Yes, we can. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes, we can. I like that.

Coach Calhoun. And like you, Mr. President, yes, we did. We did because we cared. We cared as a family. We cared about each other. We accepted our roles. We accepted who we are and did anything possible to be the best we possibly can become. I watched your rise—magnificent. I've watched their rise, and it's been one of the most emotional seasons of my entire life.

I'm proud of what you've done, certainly, and I'm certainly proud of my kids. And I just thank you very much for having us here. And I want to especially congratulate you, because last night I knew you were pretty excited to watch the Chicago Bulls. Am I correct?

The President. I was. [*Laughter*]

Coach Calhoun. That was an easy call.

The President. What do you think? Some of you guys may want to look at the Bulls organization. They could use a shooter. [*Laughter*]

Coach Calhoun. But once again, thank you for everything, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you so much.

Coach Calhoun. We really appreciate having you here, and you're an inspiration to so many young people, definitely a lot of the people I've coached. And I just want to say that you make us all feel proud about our country and certainly feel proud when you interject athletics and education, because it's very important to us.

The President. Thank you so much.

Coach Calhoun. And I've got someone special to bring up now, Kemba Walker. Kemba, come on.

Guard Kemba Walker. I just want to say—I want to thank everybody for coming out. I have one question for the President. I wanted to ask you, can you teach me that walk?

The President. That walk? [*Laughter*] That's a special Presidential walk—[*laughter*]—so—but maybe in a few years. You look pretty good behind the podium, I got to say. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Walker. I'm looking forward to that. [*Laughter*] But on behalf of the team, we all just—we want to give you this jersey.

[*At this point, the President was presented with a team jersey.*]

The President. All right. Oh, man, that's outstanding. Thank you. That's a good-looking jersey there.

Absolutely. There you go. Fantastic.

All right, we're going to strike the podium and get a good picture with the whole crew.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:43 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Michael W. Krzyzewski, head coach, Duke University men's basketball team; Robert M. Knight, former head coach, U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Indiana University, and Texas Tech University men's basketball teams; and Shabazz Napier, guard, and Jeremy Lamb, guard/forward, University of Connecticut men's basketball team.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Burma
May 16, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C.1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice

stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Burma that was declared on May 20, 1997, is to continue in effect beyond May 20, 2011.

The crisis between the United States and Burma arising from the actions and policies of the Government of Burma, including its engaging in large-scale repression of the democratic opposition in Burma, that led to the declaration and modification of this national emergency has not been resolved. These actions and policies are hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to Burma and maintain in force the sanctions against Burma to respond to this threat.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser
May 16, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Well, it is wonderful to see so many old friends and a few new friends here. Let me, first of all, say that you don't have to sleep my campaign, but the eating and breathing part I agree with. [*Laughter*]

Let me tell you, I feel extraordinarily confident, in part because of the great friends here who—some of you have been with me since 2007, when nobody could pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] I also feel enormous confidence because we have an extraordinarily dynamic new DNC chair in Debbie Wasserman Schultz. And I think she is going to do an outstanding job. So we are very proud of her.

I want to spend most of my time just having a conversation with you. But I thought maybe I'd tell you a little bit about the trip that I took today. I went to Memphis, Tennessee. And some of you may know Memphis has gone through some tough times. They had flooding that had displaced about 1,500 people. And so we had a chance to meet with some folks whose homes had been overrun with water. And they described, apparently, with water comes frogs and snakes. I didn't realize the snake part. Michelle would not have been happy—[*laughter*]—to know that there were snakes along with this water.

But what was remarkable was how the community had come together and they had organized over a hundred churches to help take people in. And we met with some of the first-responders, some of whom were volunteers. And it was an extraordinary testimony to the American spirit.

And then I gave a commencement address at Booker T. Washington High School. Now, Booker T. Washington has some very prominent alumni and has been an institution in Memphis for quite some time. But the community surrounding Booker T. had fallen on hard times, in South Memphis. And just a few years ago they had a 50 percent graduation rate. Half the kids dropped out of school. This is one of the toughest neighborhoods in the country. I think—has the highest poverty rate of any place, just about, in Tennessee, one of the highest crime rates in the Nation.

And every kid that you met had some extraordinary story. The young man who introduced me, his father had been killed when he was 4 years old after getting shot 22 times. He was born with a hole in his heart and had to have it repaired over a lengthy period of time when he was very young.

And every young person you met—single mom, struggled, lived in housing projects in

Memphis. But because of a dynamic principal, because of some of the reforms that had been initiated in Tennessee, supported by the work we're doing at the Federal Government, they had now lifted their graduation rate to 90 percent.

They had started organizing AP courses in math and science in the school. And I will tell you, I could not have been more moved or prouder to see these young people receive their diplomas, because you knew how hard they had worked and how much they had overcome to get to where they were.

And it speaks to something that Debbie mentioned, which is what our vision of the country is. I gave a budget speech a while back, and I made the point that the budget debates that we're having right now are not just about numbers. It's about deficit; it's about debt; it's about how we organize a government that lives within its means. And that's absolutely critical. It's, by the way, as critical for progressives as it is for anybody, because if we want to have a strong foundation for us to provide opportunity in the future, we've got to make sure that we got our deficit and our debt under control.

But part of what this budget debate is also about is what's our vision for America. Who are we as a people? Who are we as a nation? And what I explained was, is that in the America that I want to see 20 years from now, 30 years from now, 40 years from now, we are building on the basic precept that anybody in this country can make it if they try. That Malia and Sasha will make it, but those kids that I spoke to today, they'll make it too. That your children will make it, but those kids in Anacostia will also have a chance.

And in order for us to make sure that that opportunity is available for everyone, it means we're going to have to make ourselves more competitive, because we now face a 21st-century economy that is not like the economy that we grew up in. And it means we're going to have to make investments in education and step up our game and increase our college graduation rates. It means we've got to rebuild our infrastructure. We used to have the best infrastructure in the world, and we no longer do. And that will put us over the long term at a competitive disadvantage. And by the way, we can put a lot of people to work, doing the work that America needs done, rebuilding roads and bridges, but also broadband lines and a smart grid and high-speed rail.

It means that we've got to make sure that we are investing in basic science and research to maintain our competitive edge over the long term. It means that we have a safety net that is smart and lean and efficient, but is there for people, so that if they've worked hard all their lives, by the time they arrive at their golden years they know that they've got health care that they can count on, and they know that they've got a basic floor that Social Security provides.

It means that we have an energy policy so that our economy is not subject to the whims of the spot oil market. It means we've got an immigration system that works for all of America, one that observes our tradition as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants.

Now, we've made extraordinary strides over the last 2 years in moving the country in that direction. We averted a Great Depression because of the actions we took. We made sure that we have an auto industry that has now turned a profit—all three Big Three automakers—and hired back workers that nobody thought was possible. We have made extraordinary progress in investing in clean energy—largest investment in clean energy in our history.

We've made the largest investment in education in our history. We haven't just put more money into our education system, but we've demanded accountability and reform, and in some cases, broken some china within the Democratic Party, saying that this is too important for us to be held back by dogma and ideology.

We've removed 100,000 troops from Iraq and made sure that we've got a strategy in Afghanistan that will allow us to transition to Afghan lead, and that means then that we can focus not only on the extraordinary opportunities that present themselves in the Middle East, but also focus on rebuilding here at home.

And along the way we've made sure that you can serve in our military regardless of who you love and made sure that we had two strong women on the Supreme Court, because you can never have enough women on the Supreme Court.

So I'm extraordinarily proud of what we've accomplished. But we've got more work to do. Even on the things that we've already accomplished—like financial regulatory reform, to make sure that we don't have the kind of financial meltdown that we almost experienced in 2008—we've got to implement that law.

On health care, we achieved what had eluded this country for a hundred years: putting in place a structure so that nobody will go bankrupt when they get sick, everybody has access to affordable health care. But we've got to make sure that it gets implemented and that we follow through.

And so when I spoke at Grant Park back in what seems a long time ago—[*laughter*]—I had no gray hair back then—[*laughter*]—I told everybody that wasn't the end, that was the beginning. We're just a quarter of the way through, and we've got to make sure that we finish our task.

We've got to make sure that when we talk to our kids and when we talk to our grandkids, we can say, you know what, we ran the race, we finished the job. And we won't have solved every problem in this country and we can rest assured that that next generation will have challenges that we can't even imagine yet, but we will be able to say to them with conviction that we are passing on to them an America that is stronger and more vibrant, that is as compassionate and generous, and can still do big things, the kind of America that all of us imagine.

And that's worth working for. That's worth fighting for. And I'm ready to fight alongside with you. All right? Thank you very much, everybody. Good. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:59 p.m. at the St. Regis Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Alisha Kiner, principal, Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis, TN.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser
May 16, 2011

Hello, everybody! Thank you. Thank you, everybody.

Well, it is good to see all of you here tonight. What an incredible honor to be introduced by Ernie Green. Please give Ernie Green a big round of applause. I would not be standing here today were it not for people like Ernie Green.

And how about my new DNC chair, Debbie Wasserman Schultz. She is tireless—tireless. And she's got the most adorable kids, and I don't know how she keeps up with everything. But as Michelle said, "If you want something done, put a woman in charge." So—[*applause*]—all right, everybody got—women, you got a little too excited on that. [*Laughter*]

You know, I've been thinking a lot lately about this campaign gearing back up, and obviously, it evokes memories of 2008. And I think back to that night in Grant Park when all the work, all the traveling through Iowa, all the stops by diners and in folks' living rooms and in barns in some cases—[*laughter*]—had all culminated in this incredible moment, a moment that was less about me than it was about the American people and the commitment that we made to each other, that we wanted a country that was true to its founding ideals, but had adapted to a new century, an America that was big in spirit and bold in vision.

And I said on that night that this wasn't the end, but rather, it was the beginning. Because what we understood even then was that our country had reached a crossroads. That we had a series of decisions that were going to help determine the future not just of our children, but our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren. That we were living in an age in which the world had shrunk; it had become more interconnected than ever before. And that if we did not make some critical decisions now, if we stopped just kicking the can down the road,

but we decided that we were actually going to seize the moment and transform our education system and finally fix our health care system and deal with our energy policy so that we were no longer subject to the whims of the spot oil market, and if we didn't transform our foreign policy to recognize the visions and dreams of billions of people around the world who were yearning to be free—if we didn't make some fundamental changes, that we might be the first generation that was passing on an America that was less hopeful, that was less generous, and that all those people who felt the American Dream slipping out of their fingers, that somehow that loss of hope would continue.

And I said at the time, this is going to be an uphill climb. Now, I didn't know how uphill it was going to be. [*Laughter*] None of us did. It turned out that on that night we had already lost millions of jobs because of the financial meltdown and the recession. And it wasn't until a few months after my Inauguration that we realized we would ultimately lose 8 million jobs before any of our economic plans had a chance to take effect, the worst recession since the Great Depression. And there are families all across the country that are still suffering from the aftershocks of that.

And so we had to immediately start acting. And in some cases, the actions we took weren't always popular. But we knew that it was vital for us to act boldly and swiftly to address the crisis.

And let's take a look at what we were able to accomplish. An economy that was shrinking by about 6 percent has now grown for five consecutive quarters. An economy that was shedding jobs every month now has seen over 2 million jobs created just in the last 14. An auto industry that some had written off now are making profits again and have hired back all their workers. The financial system stabilized. We got the economy moving in the right direction.

And along the way, we did a few other things. [*Laughter*] Along the way, we did a few other things. We decided that we didn't want equal pay for equal work to be just an empty slogan, so we strengthened laws to make sure that our daughters are treated as well as our sons.

We decided that in a nation as wealthy as ours, it was unacceptable for people to go bankrupt just because they got sick. And so after 100 years, we finally delivered on the promise of making sure that we had affordable, accessible health care in this country for all people.

We made record investments in clean energy, record investments in basic research, and restored science to its rightful place.

We made the largest Federal investment in education in our history, but we didn't just put more money in. We decided we were finally going to deliver on reform and help catalyze reforms in 40 States all across the country to make sure that schools are doing right by every single student, K through 12. And we also made sure that young people are able to afford to go to college, so we took away billions of dollars of subsidies that were going to banks and put those in the student loan system so that millions more young people were able to go to college without taking on tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of debt.

We appointed a couple more women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina. We ended the law that said that you could not serve your country because of who you loved. We made the biggest infrastructure investment in this country since Dwight Eisenhower built the Interstate Highway System.

Internationally, we brought 100,000 troops back from Iraq and are ending combat operations. We regained momentum in Afghanistan and are now in the process of transition, where we can bring our troops home. We have gone after Al Qaida relentlessly and made America safer in the process.

And we've restored around the world a sense of America as a responsible actor that will uphold the principles of human rights and liberty and democracy.

And in between, we've dealt with pirates and—[*laughter*]—do you remember? Remember pirates—[*laughter*]—H1N1 and an oil spill and locusts? [*Laughter*] So we've been pretty busy.

And I couldn't be prouder of our record over the last 2 years. Promises were made during the campaign, and so many promises have been kept.

And yet, all across America, folks are still struggling. We've been able to avert the worst possible crises, but a lot of those challenges that we confronted in 2008, those challenges are still out there. Wages and incomes have flatlined for the middle class all across America. The rates of poverty in too many communities are way too high. In too many schools, too many of our children still drop out without hope, without vision for the future.

We still don't have an energy policy in this country that is equal to our potential and our greatness. And we're still vulnerable to high gas prices that are just killing families all across America right now.

We still haven't reformed our broken immigration system. So we have too many people living in the shadows, being exploited by workers, driving down the wages of workers as a consequence, because those employers aren't subject to the rules. And families are being broken up in the process.

We still haven't fully transformed our economy so that we're competitive the way we need to be and are creating jobs at the pace we need and growth at the rate that we need.

And so we still got so much work to do. The challenges we confronted were not the work of 1 year or 2 years or even one term. And that's why I'm going to need you. That's why, in some ways, this campaign may be even more important and more challenging than 2012. We have to finish what we started. We have to finish what we started, in 2012 and beyond, and that's why I'm going to need you, all in.

Part of what made our campaign special was you, going out knocking on doors and organizing, some of you traveling to other States in the middle of winter, occasionally getting doors slammed in your faces. [*Laughter*] "Obama who?" But that energy, that inspiration that you gave me, the commitments you made to each other about the kind of country you wanted to live in, that spirit we need now more than ever.

And that's part of the reason why we decided not to have our campaign here in Washington, DC, but to have it based again in Chicago. Because I don't want a campaign that suddenly is all about the insiders, suddenly is all about the pundits and the lobbyists. And I wanted to make sure that we had a campaign that was rooted and grounded in what folks are talking about around the kitchen table and around the water coolers all across America. And that's why it's going to be so important that you are as engaged, as involved, as motivated, as you were 2½, 3 years ago. Because what's at stake right now is not any particular policy; it has to do with a broader vision of where we want to take our country.

We—I gave a budget address a while back, and a lot of people reported on the numbers and the debt and the deficit and why this is so important. And let me tell you, we as Democrats, we as progressives, need to be just as concerned about the debt as anybody else. Because that's how we will be able to move our vision forward—investing in education, investing in infrastructure, investing in clean energy—if we've got a government that lives within its means. So we've got to be concerned about that.

But this broader budget debate that is now carrying over and will probably continue all the way until November of next year, it's also about what our vision of the country is. Are we a country that's going to continue to be able to do big things? Are we going to continue to make a commitment that every child, regardless of race or station or region, can achieve their dreams because they've got a school system that's delivering for them? Are we going to continue to be a nation that has the best infrastructure, moving products and services and people and information from place to place, because we've invested not just in roads and bridges and ports and airports, but in broadband lines and smart grids? Are we investing in the future the way previous generations invested in us?

Are we going to continue to make sure that here in the United States of America we're discovering the new great sources of energy that

will help us save the planet, even as we're strengthening our economy and are putting our people back to work? Are we still dreaming big dreams in America? And are we going to continue to be a country that makes sure that our senior citizens can retire with dignity and respect and that Medicare is going to be there for them and Social Security is going to be there for them?

And as we grapple through these problems, are we going to make sure that the burden is shared by everybody? We're going to have to make tough choices. But are we going to make sure that folks like me, who have been so blessed by this country, that we're doing our part?

The other side right now, their only agenda is to provide tax cuts to folks like me. And you know what, we all like tax cuts, but—[*laughter*]—no, I mean, I've never met somebody who said, "No, no, no." [*Laughter*] But you know what, I don't want $200,000 in my pocket if I know that that means that 33 seniors are going to have to pay an extra $6,000 for their Medicare services. That's not something I want. I don't want special favors for me if it means that a whole bunch of kids are being cut out of Head Start.

See—and the reason I don't want it is not just out of a sense of charity. It's because my life is better when, as I'm driving down the street and I pass by a school, I know, you know what, that school is doing a great job for those kids. And if I pass by a senior couple holding hands and I think to myself, you know what, that might be me and Michelle some day. [*Laughter*] And I like the fact that I live in a country where they've got some security in their golden years.

I—that makes my life better. That's the kind of America that I want Malia and Sasha to inherit. That's the kind of America I want all of your children and grandchildren inheriting. That's what this debate is about. That's what this campaign is about. That's what this election is about.

So let me just close by saying this. There have been times over the last 2½ years where I know you all have gotten frustrated sometimes. [*Laughter*] I know all these conversations you're having. [*Laughter*] "Oh, why did Obama compromise with the Republicans on that?" [*Laughter*] "Why did health care take so long?" "Where's my public option?" [*Laughter*] You know?

And I know that even though everybody is saying nice things, people are saying—[*laughter*]—I know people are also saying, you know, he's looking old. [*Laughter*] You know, he seemed so fresh and young back in 2008. Now, look, he's all gray and—[*laughter*].

You know, we've gone through some setbacks. In some cases, we haven't gotten everything we wanted done as quickly as we wanted it done. You know, I'm a little dinged up here and there. [*Laughter*]

But I tell you what, though. The vision that brought us together in 2008, that's undiminished in me. The confidence I have in the American people, in their decency, that's undiminished. My faith that we can make tough choices on behalf of future generations, that's undiminished. My belief in you has not lessened.

So when you think back to these last 2½ years, I want you to do so not with complacency, not with full satisfaction, but I want it to motivate you. Don't let people tell you that we can't bring about change. We have already brought about change. And we have more work to do.

And if you are with me, if you're all in, if you're willing to knock on doors and call your friends and call your neighbors and keep at it, even when the journey is tough, I have no doubt that we will get to where we set out to go 3½ years ago, and we will deliver the kind of America that we want to our children.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:21 p.m. at the Capital Hilton hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Ernest G. Green, board member, Albert Shanker Institute.

Remarks Following a Meeting With King Abdullah II of Jordan
May 17, 2011

President Obama. Well, it is a great pleasure to welcome once again my good friend King Abdullah to the White House. The United States and Jordan have had a longstanding friendship, an extraordinary relationship of cooperation on a wide range of fronts. I have valued His Majesty's advice on numerous occasions, and obviously this meeting was an opportunity for us to share our views on the extraordinary changes that are taking place throughout the Middle East, throughout the region.

We discussed the situation in Libya and are grateful for the support of a wide range of Arab countries in our efforts to make sure that humanitarian assistance and humanitarian protection occurs inside of Libya. We discussed the rapid transformation that's taking place in places like Egypt and Tunisia, and we both agreed that it's critical that not only does political reform proceed, but economic reform accompanies those changes there, because so much of what's taking place has to do with the aspirations of young people throughout the Arab world for their ability to determine their own fate, to get an education, to get a job, to be able to support a family. And that means some of the old structures that were inhibiting their ability to progress have to be reworked.

His Majesty discussed the reform efforts that are taking place inside Jordan as well, and we welcome the initiatives that His Majesty has already embarked on and feel confident that, to the extent that he's able to move these reforms forward, this will be good for the security and stability of Jordan, but also will be good for the economic prosperity of the people of Jordan. And so we're very pleased to support him on that front.

Along those lines, one of the things we discussed is how the United States can continue to be supportive of these economic efforts that His Majesty has embarked on. And so I'm pleased to announce that we have mobilized several hundreds of millions of dollars through OPIC, and that will leverage ultimately about a billion dollars for economic development inside of Jordan. In addition, because of the huge spike in commodity prices throughout the world, we are going to be providing 50,000 metric tons of wheat to Jordan. All of this will help to stabilize the cost of living and day-to-day situation of Jordanians and will provide a foundation so that these economic reforms can move forward and long-term development can take place. So we're very happy to be partnering with His Majesty on that issue.

We also discussed the situation with respect to Israel and the Palestinian conflict. And we both share the view that despite the many changes, or perhaps because of the many changes, that are taking place in the region, it's more vital than ever that both Israelis and Palestinians find a way to get back to the table and begin negotiating a process whereby they can create a—two states that are living side by side in peace and security.

Jordan, obviously, with its own peace with Israel, has an enormous stake in this. The United States has an enormous stake in this. We will continue to partner to try to encourage an equitable and just solution to a problem that has been nagging the region for many, many years.

Finally, I just want to say that we continue to appreciate all the security and counterterrorism cooperation that we receive from the Jordanians. It is very important in terms of our own security, and that partnership we expect to continue.

So, Your Majesty, you are always welcome here. The American people feel a great affection for the Jordanian people. And we trust that during this remarkable time of transition in the region, that Jordan will be at the forefront in being able to move a process forward that creates greater opportunity and ensures that Jordan is a model of a prosperous, modern, and successful Arab state under your leadership.

So thank you very much.

King Abdullah. Thank you. Mr. President, I'm delighted to be back here and again to take this opportunity to thank you and your Government for the tremendous support that you're

showing Jordan economically and the support of the United States and a lot of our friends internationally on really being able to push reform in an aggressive manner in our country and, again, your continued interest and support on the core issue of the Middle East, which is the Israeli and Palestinian peace.

We are very, very grateful to the President's role in all these issues. I'm delighted to be back here. And I will continue to be a strong partner with you, sir, on all the challenges that we face. Thank you.

President Obama. Good. All right. Thank you very much, everyone.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:17 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at a Reception Celebrating Jewish American Heritage Month
May 17, 2011

Hello, everybody. Good afternoon. Welcome to the White House.

I am going to be very brief, but I do want to start by recognizing a few people. First of all, a great friend of mine, one of the driving forces behind the creation of this month, and somebody who happens to be the new chair of the DNC, Debbie Wasserman Schultz is here. I want to thank—did somebody say, "Stand up!" to Debbie? Come on, that's—[*laughter*]—that's all right. There's a lot of fight in that little package. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Ambassador Michael Oren for being here and doing fine work representing our great friend, the State of Israel. Jewish Americans have always stood up for freedom and democracy around the world, and that includes our unshakeable support and commitment to the security of the State of Israel.

I want to thank the Maccabeats for their outstanding performance. They just did an outstanding number for me. It was very brief. [*Laughter*] It said, "Four more years." [*Laughter*] It was good. I really liked it. So thank you.

We've got more than a few Members of Congress here, and I just want to say thank you to all of them for everything that they do working with us to help advance not only freedom and prosperity here in the United States, but around the world.

Finally, we're honored to be joined by Justices Breyer and Ginsburg, and a dear friend of mine and an inspiration to the world, the great Elie Wiesel is here, so—[*applause*].

This month is a chance for Americans of every faith to appreciate the contributions of the Jewish people throughout our history, often in the face of unspeakable discrimination and adversity. For hundreds of years, Jewish Americans have fought heroically in battle and inspired us to pursue peace. They've built our cities, cured our sick. They've paved the way in the sciences and the law, in our politics and in the arts. They remain our leaders, our teachers, our neighbors, and our friends.

Not bad for a band of believers who have been tested from the moment that they came together and professed their faith. The Jewish people have always persevered. And that's why today is about celebrating the people in this room, the thousands who came before, the generations who will shape the future of our country and the future of the world.

So I hope that everybody enjoys themselves. I encourage you to take a look at some of the exhibits that are set up here in the hallway. And I am grateful for all of your friendships.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Nobel Prize winner, author, and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel. The Jewish American Heritage Month proclamation of April 29 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Stabilization of Iraq
May 17, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication continuing the national emergency with respect to the stabilization of Iraq. This notice states that the national emergency with respect to the stabilization of Iraq declared in Executive Order 13303 of May 22, 2003, as modified in scope and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13315 of August 28, 2003, Executive Order 13350 of July 29, 2004, Executive Order 13364 of November 29, 2004, and Executive Order 13438 of July 17, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond May 22, 2011.

Obstacles to the orderly reconstruction of Iraq, the restoration and maintenance of peace and security in the country, and the development of political, administrative, and economic institutions in Iraq continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Accordingly, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to this threat and maintain in force the measures taken to deal with that national emergency.

Recognizing positive developments in Iraq, the United Nations Security Council decided, in Resolution 1956 (2010), to terminate on June 30, 2011, arrangements concerning the Development Fund for Iraq established in Resolutions 1483 (2003) and 1546 (2004). The Security Council also called upon the Iraqi government to finalize the full and effective transition to a post-Development Fund mechanism by June 30, 2011. My Administration will evaluate Iraq's ongoing efforts in this regard, as well as its progress in resolving outstanding debts and claims arising from actions of the previous regime, so that I may determine whether to continue beyond June 30, 2011, the prohibitions contained in Executive Order 13303 of May 22, 2003, as amended by Executive Order 13364 of November 29, 2004, on any attachment, judgment, decree, lien, execution, garnishment, or other judicial process with respect to the Development Fund for Iraq, the accounts, assets, and property held by the Central Bank of Iraq, and Iraqi petroleum-related products, which are in addition to the sovereign immunity accorded Iraq under otherwise applicable law.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Commencement Address at the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut
May 18, 2011

The President. Well, good afternoon, everyone. Distinguished guests, Governor Malloy and Congressman Courtney, families, friends, and most of all—well, let's try it this way: Cadets, what class is this?

Cadets. Class of 2011!

The President. Okay, I just wanted to make sure.

It is a great honor to be with you as we commission the newest ensigns in the United States Coast Guard. And, cadets, let me say—and I know your families will agree—you all look fantastic. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Secretary Napolitano, for your introduction, but more importantly, your outstanding leadership in keeping our homeland secure and, along with Admiral Papp, keeping our Coast Guard strong.

And to Admiral Burhoe and Academy faculty and staff, thank you for building these outstanding young men and women into "inspiring leaders of character" who are "prepared to serve their country." And, Admiral Burhoe, as you prepare to retire in the coming days, I just want to thank you and your wife Betsy for 34 years of distinguished service to our country. We are grateful.

I have to say, by the way, he looks a little too young to retire. So—[*laughter*]—you don't want him roaming around the house. Make sure he's doing something. [*Laughter*]

Although my understanding is she's not here today, I also want to acknowledge your next Superintendent, Admiral Sandra Stosz. She will become the first woman ever to lead one of our Nation's military academies. That's an incredible tribute to her, but also a tribute to the opportunities that the Coast Guard affords women of talent and commitment, including the class of 2011, which has one of the largest numbers of women cadets in the history of this Academy.

But, cadets, today is your day. But it's also a testament to those who supported you every step of your journey. When you chose this life of service, your families backed you up. When you thought you couldn't go on, they bucked you up. I suspect, when things got a little tight in the money department, they coughed it up. [*Laughter*] So, cadets, you are here because of them, and I ask you in joining me in honoring your remarkable families.

I have to say, it is a personal pleasure to be here, because since the day I took office, the United States Coast Guard has played a special role in my Presidency and with my family. I've seen the Coast Guard's precision when some of you—the class of 2011—marched in the parade during my Inauguration. You looked pretty good on that day too. [*Laughter*] It was a little colder that day, if you recall. [*Laughter*]

I've seen your devotion to duty all along the Gulf Coast, when the Coast Guard, including members of this class, worked day and night, tirelessly, as you led the largest environmental cleanup in our Nation's history.

I've seen your pride, when I was in, of all places, Afghanistan. I was in Bagram, thanking our troops for their service. And I was giving a shout-out to every service: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines. And then, way in the back of the crowd, a voice shouted out, "And Coast Guard!" [*Laughter*] There was no ocean in sight. [*Laughter*] Not a body of water visible anywhere. [*Laughter*] But the Coast Guard was there, serving with honor, as you have in every major conflict that our Nation has ever fought.

In fact, I see the professionalism of the Coast Guard every day in the officers and enlisted personnel who serve with us at the White House. And they include Admiral Stephen Rochon, who wore the uniform for 36 years, then became the Chief Usher at the White House, responsible for keeping us running smooth, day in, day out. His grandson Patrick is graduating today, and I'm told that Patrick's classmates have a bet on whether his grandfather can still fit in his old uniform. [*Laughter*]

Well, Admiral Rochon is here. I want to thank him for his outstanding service to our family and our Nation. And by the way, the uniform still fits, so we're proud of him.

I'd add that my Michelle is inspired by the Coast Guard as well. Last summer, Michelle had the honor of becoming the first First Lady to sponsor a Coast Guard cutter, the *Stratton*. And she was deeply moved by the story of Dorothy Stratton and the SPARS that she led in World War II. At the christening, Michelle was also very relieved that the bottle actually broke. [*Laughter*] And I know that she is so grateful to be part of the life of that Coast Guard cutter and its crew.

Cadets, this is the heritage, this is the tradition that you will carry forward. And I know that you will do so with the same sense of purpose, the same sense of patriotism that have defined your days at this Academy.

You excelled physically, especially that first Swab Summer. Your upperclassmen—your cadre—were kind enough to let you carry all those heavy bags and logs—[*laughter*]—and rafts over your head until your arms were numb. They treated you to the pleasure of relentless questioning and memorization and recitations. And as a reward for your endurance, they gave you the gift of Sea Trials. [*Laughter*] But you survived.

You excelled intellectually. Among your ranks is Cadet Melissa McCafferty. She is a recipient of the Truman Scholarship, making the Coast Guard Academy one of the only schools ever to win that prestigious scholarship 3 years in a row—3 years in a row.

Where's Melissa? Let me embarrass you in front of everybody. [*Laughter*] There you are, right over there. Congratulations.

I'm also told that the class of 2011 has earned the highest GPA of any class in the history of this Academy. So these are not just pretty faces here. [*Laughter*] Well done.

You've excelled professionally, pulling together and succeeding together during your training, serving in dozens of countries on six continents, aboard cutters saving lives on the high seas, joining maritime exercises with our foreign partners, keeping illegal drugs from reaching our streets.

Through it all, you've embraced "the liking for the sea and its lore." That includes a liking and respect for one another. You come from every station in life, every corner of our country, including my home State of Hawaii. In fact, I'm told that Cadet Jennifer Proctor comes from my old high school, Punahou in Honolulu. Where is she? Jennifer? Come on. Howzit? Right on.

This Academy welcomes cadets from all over the world, including two dedicated young men in your class from the Marshall Islands and Romania. And I want to thank President Zedkaia of the Marshall Islands, as well as King George Tupou from Tonga, who is here. They are two of America's closest partners among the Pacific Island nations. Their citizens serve bravely alongside our forces, including in Afghanistan. And we are very, very grateful. So thank you so much for your presence.

And, cadets, you have excelled ethically. "Who lives here reveres honor, honors duty." You know those words well. They set the highest standards of conduct and integrity for all who pass through Chase Hall. Your presence here today and the new boards that your loved ones and mentors will place upon your shoulders signify that you have met these highest of standards.

Now, despite your impressive achievements, I'm told that over these 4 years you've also earned a reputation as a class that always had to wait. [*Laughter*] That includes waiting longer than any other first-year class in Academy history for the privileges that you had earned. I've kept you waiting as well. [*Laughter*] So in keeping with longstanding tradition—[*laughter*]—I hereby absolve all cadets serving restrictions for minor offenses. The superintendent reminded me, that's "minor" offenses. [*Laughter*]

So, cadets, today is a celebration of your success. But it's also a day of expectation, because soon you will report to flight school, sectors, and shore commands or begin your sea duty aboard cutters.

Your Nation has great expectations as well. We've made an enormous investment to build you into the leaders that you are. Yes, the Coast Guard may be the smallest of our services, and you will be tasked with vast responsibilities, protecting thousands of miles of coast, securing hundreds of ports, patrolling millions of miles of ocean. But I'm absolutely confident that you will meet these obligations. For in you we see the same spirit that has made your service "Always Ready" for more than two centuries.

In you we see the same courage of the coastguardsmen who defended our young Nation when we didn't have a Navy, who preserved our Union, who fought back at Pearl Harbor, who landed our boats on the beaches of Normandy, and who patrolled the rivers of Vietnam.

In you we see the readiness that has made the Coast Guard one of our Nation's first-responders, leading the evacuation of lower Manhattan on 9/11 and often being the very first Americans on the scene, from the earthquake in Haiti to the oil spill in the Gulf.

In you we see the same compassion that has led coastguardsmen to pull stranded Americans from the rooftops during Katrina, save desperate migrants clinging to rafts in the Caribbean, and even today, as the Coast Guard rescues Americans from the surging Mississippi.

And while we can never predict what the future may hold, we know that the complex missions asked of our Coast Guard have never been more important. Around the world, we need you to partner with other nations to secure their ports, protect the vital shipping lanes of the Persian Gulf, combat piracy off the Horn of Africa, and help train foreign partners from the Americas to Africa to Asia. Here at home, we need you to stop those smugglers and protect our oceans and prevent terrorists from slipping deadly weapons into our ports.

Indeed, every American can be proud of our brave military and intelligence personnel who made sure that the terrorist leader who attacked us on 9/11 will never threaten America again. But the hard work of protecting our country, the hard work goes on, securing our homeland and guarding our shores. We will never waver in the defense of this country that we love.

None of these missions will be easy, and none are without risk. Etched among the headstones of Arlington and in seaside memorials overlooking the oceans are the names of Coast Guard men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation. This is the life and the risk that you have chosen to accept.

As your Commander in Chief, I want you to know that your Nation will do everything in our power to help you succeed. That's why we're investing in the new ships and national security cutters and aircraft that you need to get the job done. It's why we're adding new inspectors and investigators and support personnel to keep pace with today's missions.

And because my wife Michelle has met with so many Coast Guard spouses and children and heard about the challenges that they face as military families, we've made it a priority to improve Coast Guard housing and childcare. We need to take care of your families as well as they take care of you.

Ultimately, though, it won't be the advanced technologies, the additional budget that determines your success. It won't be the cutters that you command that give you the edge when the seas are swelling and a life is on the line. Your lives in service will be defined by something else, something inside of you, invisible to the eye, but obvious for all to see. The arc of your careers, like the course of our country, will be shaped by the values that have kept us strong for more than 200 years.

You see, as Americans, we've always fixed our eyes on the future, setting our sights on what lies beyond the horizon. We haven't always known exactly how to get there. We haven't always known every shoal that lies ahead. But we are sure of our destination, and so we've charted our course toward that "more perfect Union."

We haven't always been the biggest or strongest of nations. There have been moments in our history when others have counted us out or predicted the demise of our improbable American experiment. But what the naysayers and doubters have never understood is that our American journey has always been propelled by a spirit and strength that sets us apart.

Like any good crew, we welcome the talents and skills of all people, no matter where you come from, no matter what you look like. With every generation, we renew our country with the drive and dynamism that says, here in America, anything is possible.

And when tough times inevitably come, when war and economic hardship threaten to blow us off course, we do what Americans have always done. We remember our moral compass, that we are citizens with obligations to each other, that we all have responsibilities, that we're all in this together, that we rise and fall as one, that we are the United States of America. And so we pull together. We each do

our part, knowing that we have navigated rough seas before and we will do so again.

We Americans are an optimistic people. We know that even the darkest storms pass. We know that a brighter day beckons, that, yes, tomorrow can be a better day. For through two centuries of challenge and change, we have never lost sight of our guiding stars: the liberty, the justice, the opportunity that we seek for ourselves, and the universal freedoms and rights that we stand for around the world.

So, cadets, if we remember this, if you stay true to the lessons you've learned here on the Thames, if we hold fast to what keeps us strong and unique among nations, then I am confident that future historians will look back on this moment and say that when we faced the test of our time. We stood our watch, we did our duty, we continued our American journey, and we passed our country, safer and stronger, to the next generation.

So congratulations, class of 2011. *Semper Paratus*. And God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:17 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Robert J. Papp, Jr., USCG, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard; Adm. J. Scott Burhoe, USCG, outgoing Superintendent, and Adm. Sandra Stosz, USCG, incoming Superintendent, U.S. Coast Guard Academy; Betsy Burhoe, wife of Adm. Burhoe; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Boston, Massachusetts

May 18, 2011

The President. Hello, Boston! It is good to be back in Boston. It's good to be back with one of the finest Governors in the United States of America and my friend, Deval Patrick. It's good to be back with one of the finest mayors in the United States of America, Tom Menino. It's good to be back with a great congressional delegation, including Niki Tsongas and Bill Keating.

And this is a little tough to say, but it's good to be back with some Celtics. See, look at Ray. Ray was—Ray wishes he was in Chicago tonight, actually. [*Laughter*] But I am so grateful not only to Ray Allen, who is a great friend—and just a gorgeous family, I had a chance to say hello to them today—the greatest three-point shooter of all time. But to have the honor of knowing and becoming friends with perhaps the greatest basketball player—certainly the greatest champion—of all time, Bill Russell, what a outstanding honor. And his beautiful daughter Karen, thank you. Bill knows how to win, and he's on my team.

It is good to be back in Boston. Back in 2004, I gave a little speech here that got some attention. It's been downhill ever since. [*Laughter*] But it's good to get out of Washington, DC. Now, look, I—DC is a nice town. It has been treating my family wonderfully. But the conversation you hear in Washington is very different than the one you hear around the kitchen table or around the water cooler.

And that's why we decided, for our reelection campaign, for the first time in modern history, we would be based outside of Washington, DC. We were going back to Chicago, because I don't want our campaign to be hearing only from lobbyists and pundits and insiders. I want our campaign to be hearing from the people who sent me to the White House. I want to be hearing from you. I want to make sure we're putting our campaign in your hands.

I want our campaign in the hands of the same organizers, the same volunteers, the same folks who drove up to New Hampshire and trudged around in the snow and hung in there with us after we lost the primary, and all the wonderful people who, in some cases, hadn't been involved in politics before, but felt

this was a moment to do extraordinary things. That's what this campaign is still about.

Now, a few things have changed since that time. Ray Allen doesn't get older, but I do. [*Laughter*] I'm a little bit grayer. I've got a few dings and dents.

Audience member. We love you, Barack!

The President. I appreciate that. [*Laughter*] But let's face it, you know? I mean, these Presidential years are dog years, so—[*laughter*]. But all of us can still remember that night in Grant Park, the excitement in the streets, the sense of possibility in the air. And I hope you all remember what I said then. I said, this isn't the end, this is the beginning. This is just the start of what is going to be a steep climb.

And that summit is going to be the moment when we can say that America's promise has been fulfilled and every child in America has opportunity and anybody who wants a job can find one and the middle class, when they carry their responsibilities and they're looking after their family and looking after their neighborhoods and looking after their communities, that they know they can achieve the American Dream.

We said, at the time, the climb would be steep. Now, it's turned out to be a little steeper than we expected. [*Laughter*] We took office in the middle of the worst recession in our lifetimes. We lost 4 million jobs in the 6 months before I was sworn in. In the few months after I was sworn in, before our economic policies had to take effect, we lost another 4 million. All across the country, folks out of work; hundreds of thousands without homes; a recession so severe that families all across America are still feeling the aftershocks, still grappling with the challenges of something that we had not seen in our lifetime before.

And in response, we had to move swiftly and boldly, and we had to take some tough decisions that were not always popular. And you know what, 2½ years later, an economy that was shrinking by 6 percent is now growing. Over the last 3 months alone, we've added about three-quarters of a million private sector jobs. Over the last 14 months, we've added more than 2 million private sector jobs. And some of the things that folks said would not work, they worked. GM is hiring all of its workers back. The Big Three are all making a profit again.

We still got some climbing to do, though, so you can't put away those hiking shoes. Just today there was a story in the paper about how manufacturing jobs are coming back, in part because of the policies we put in place. But wages—the wages that are being paid aren't what they used to be. It used to be that if you were willing to work hard, you could bring home a paycheck that supported a family. But now, even if you've got a job, you may be worrying about living paycheck to paycheck. And you can't afford the rising cost of everything from health care to groceries to gas.

And the fact is, that was a problem that we knew about before the recession hit. We talked about this in 2007. We talked about it during the campaign, that for a decade before the financial crisis, even as the stock market was booming, corporate profits were up, the real incomes of families, the real wages of families had actually declined.

And so our mission was never just to rescue ourselves from a recession. Our mission was how do we restore that fundamental American compact that if you work hard and act responsibly, you're going to be able to get ahead and you're going to be able to put your kids through college and you know that they will have a better life than you did; you'll be able to retire with some measure of dignity and security; and that the country as a whole will maintain its large and optimistic spirit.

That's what was and is at risk of being lost. That's why I ran for President. That's why you supported me for President. I didn't run for this office so I'd have a fancy title or a nice place to live. My house in Chicago is just fine. [*Laughter*] I ran for this office to make sure everybody in this country gets a fair shake. I ran for this office to put the American Dream back within the reach of anybody who's willing to fight for it. That's why I ran. That's why you supported me.

Now, because of you, we've been able to make some great progress over these last few years. The progress shouldn't make us compla-

cent, but it should remind us that change is possible. Change is hard, change takes time, but it's possible. It should inspire us to finish what we started.

Think about it. Because of you, we were able to prevent a second Great Depression. Because of you, we cut taxes for 95 percent of working families. We cut taxes 16 times for small businesses so that they could weather extraordinarily difficult economic circumstances. But in the next few years, we've got to make sure that the new jobs and industries of our time are created right here in the United States. In the next few years, we've got to make sure that America is prepared to win the future. We've got more work to do.

Because of you, we've ended the wasteful taxpayer subsidies that were going to banks, and we took that money and we used it to make sure college was more affordable for millions of students, billions of dollars going to make sure our young people get educated.

We've raised standards for teaching and learning in schools across the country by launching a competition called Race to the Top. But now we've got to keep that reform going until every child is ready to graduate, every child is ready for college, and they can actually afford to go as well. That's how we'll outeducate and outcompete the rest of the world for the jobs of the future. That's how America will succeed in the 21st century.

Because of you, we've made the largest investment in clean and renewable energy in our history, and it's already creating new jobs and new businesses. And at a time of high gas prices and instability around the world—and I know folks are getting hurt by high gas prices—that's why we've got to keep on making these investments.

That's why I was so disappointed yesterday when Republicans in Congress voted to keep handing $4 billion a year in taxpayer subsidies to oil and gas companies at a time when they are making tens of billions of dollars each—huge profits—while you're struggling to fill up your gas tank. It has to stop. We could take that money and instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy, we should be investing in the energy of tomorrow. And we can clean up the planet in the process. That's the right thing to do.

Because of you, we've put hundreds of thousands of people back to work rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure. But now we've got to make sure that America is built to compete in the 21st century, not just building new roads and new bridges, but high-speed rail and high-speed Internet and a smart grid. We used to have the best infrastructure, the best stuff. Other people would come from other countries, and they'd visit, and they'd marvel at our engineering feats. And now we go to Beijing, and we marvel at their airports. And we go to Europe, and we marvel at their trains. That's not the American way. We've got more work to do.

Because of you, we did what we have been trying to do for almost a century. With a little assist from the former Governor of Massachusetts, we—[*laughter*]—we said that health care should no longer be a privilege in this country, it should be affordable and available for every American. We said that in the United States of America, just like here in Massachusetts, you should never go broke because you get sick.

Because of you, we passed Wall Street reform to make sure we never go through the kind of financial crisis that we went through and to make sure that you're not cheated when you take out a mortgage or you apply for a credit card.

We passed a law that said women should get an equal day's pay for an equal day's work. And while we were at it, we put two more women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina. We overturned "don't ask, don't tell" so everybody can serve the country they love.

We removed a hundred thousand troops from Iraq and ended our combat mission there, just like I promised we would. We're taking the fight directly to Al Qaida. And because of the bravery of our men and women in uniform, Usama bin Laden will never again threaten the United States of America.

So we've been pretty busy the last couple years. [*Laughter*]

Along the way, we dealt with H1N1 and an oil spill and pirates. [*Laughter*] Do you remember pirates? [*Laughter*] Golly. [*Laughter*] Thomas Jefferson had to deal with pirates. [*Laughter*] I thought we were past that.

But we've got a lot more work to do when it comes to keeping America both safe and prosperous. We need to keep moving forward on a whole range of challenges still facing this Nation. We're going to have to confront the challenge of immigration. We've got to pass comprehensive immigration reform that upholds our tradition as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. That's the right thing to do. It's the smart thing to do. It's good for our economy.

And for all the progress we've made on energy, we've got more work to do to break this cycle of endless energy crises. We've got to bring about real energy reform that grows our economy and frees us from the grip of foreign oil, cleans up our planet for our children.

We've got to keep working to leave America better than we found it. And ultimately, that's what the budget debate is about that we're having in Washington right now. It's about who we are. It's about what we care about. It's the kind of country that we believe in.

See, I believe in an America where government lives within its means. We're going to have to cut spending in Washington. Deval has had to make tough choices. Tom Menino has had to make some tough choices. Sometimes there's programs you like, but you just can't do them right now. So that means we've got to cut some domestic spending, we've got to cut defense spending, we've got to cut health care spending. We've got to cut spending in our Tax Code. We've got to get rid of loopholes that aren't doing anything to promote economic growth and put people back to work. We've got to eliminate every dime of waste.

And if we're serious about taking responsibility for the debt we owe—and if you are progressive, you need to be worried about the debt because we can't build a foundation for a strong economy if we're in hock—that all means we're going to have to make some tough decisions about those things that we can afford to do without. And we're all going to have to share in some sacrifice.

But here's what I won't do. I will not reduce our deficit by sacrificing the things that have always made America prosper. I will not sacrifice our investments in education. I will not sacrifice scholarships for our students. I will not sacrifice medical research for our scientists. I will not sacrifice the safety of our highways or airports or our food supply or clean air or clean water. I will not sacrifice our investments in clean energy at a time when our dependence on foreign oil is causing Americans so much pain at the pump. I will not sacrifice America's future. There are more than one way to mortgage America's future.

And, Boston, if we want to reduce our deficit, our sacrifice has to be shared. And that means ending tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans in this country. I mean, this is the big thing for Republicans, just making sure that millionaires and billionaires keep their tax cuts. That's their main economic prescription. And I just want to make clear to them, it's not because I want to punish success that I think we have to roll these tax cuts back. Everybody likes a tax cut. I like tax cuts. [*Laughter*]

The easiest thing to do as a politician is say, "You don't have to do anything." That's the easiest thing to do, to just say to citizens, you know what, you don't have to do anything. Keep all your stuff. Get whatever benefits you want, and you don't have to do a thing.

I want everybody here to be successful. I want you to go as far as your dreams can take you. But if we're going to ask Americans to sacrifice a little bit, we can't tell folks like me that we don't have to do a thing. I don't want a $200,000 tax cut that's paid for by asking 33 seniors to each pay more than $6,000 extra in Medicare costs. I don't want to do that.

I don't want my tax cut paid for by cutting Head Start for kids or doing away with health insurance for millions of people on Medicaid, seniors in nursing homes or poor kids or middle class families who are raising a child with a disability like autism. That's not a tradeoff I am willing to make. And I don't believe it's a

tradeoff that most Americans want to make, no matter what party you belong to. That's not who we are. We are better than that.

I said this back in 2004: What makes America great is not just the height of our skyscrapers, it's not the might of our military, it's not the size of our GDP. What makes this country great is the character of our people.

Now, we are rugged individualists. We're self-reliant. We believe that each of us is endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. We don't like being told what to do. That's part of what makes us America. But what makes us America, what has driven this country, is that we combine that sense of individualism with an idea that we're all in this together, that I am my brother's keeper, that I am my sister's keeper, and that when I look out for somebody else, it makes my life better.

If I'm driving down the street and I pass a school and I know in that school, young people, no matter how poor they are, no matter what they look like, they're getting a great education, that makes me smile. That makes my life better.

If I'm walking along the Charles and I see a older couple holding hands, talking to each other, and I think to myself, well, that's me and Michelle, hopefully, when we can take a walk again—[*laughter*]—and knowing that after a lifetime of hard work, they've got the security of Social Security and of Medicare, that makes my life better.

If I know that somebody in a tough neighborhood, if they're willing to work hard, they're going to have opportunity, just like Deval had opportunity growing up in a tough neighborhood, then I'm thinking to myself, you know, my future will be bright because, who knows, that person somewhere along the way might start a new business that puts people to work or might invent some medicine that saves a life. That's what makes us special.

When I know that other people around me have a shot at the American Dream—that's our vision for America. It's not a vision of a small America. It's a vision of a big America, a generous America, a bold and optimistic America, where we're living within our means but we're still investing in our future, where everyone makes sacrifices and no one bears all the burden. No matter what we look like, where we come from, what God we worship to, no matter whether our ancestors landed on Ellis Island or came here on a slave ship or crossed the Rio Grande, we believe that we are all connected and we rise and fall together. And that is a strength. That is the strength of America. That's the heart of the idea of America. That's the heart of the idea of our campaign.

That's why I'm going to need your help now more than ever. This campaign is still in its early stages, but now is the time you can help shape it, make sure it gets out of the gate strong.

And I know there are times where some of you, over the last 2½ years, you've been frustrated because we haven't gotten everything done exactly how you wanted it, as quickly as you wanted it. I know. I know all your conversations. [*Laughter*] "Why did Obama compromise with the Republicans on that? Why did health care take so long? Where's our public option? Why? Why?" [*Laughter*] "Maybe he's changed." Although, somewhere you still got that poster. [*Laughter*]

Look, there are times where I felt frustrated too. But we knew this would not be easy. This is a democracy. This country is big and diverse and full of different ideas, and power is diffuse, which is part of what preserves our liberty. And it means sometimes we compromise, and it means sometimes we don't get our way. And it means that things that are so obvious to us, so self-apparent to us, may be completely anathema to somebody else, and we've got to persuade them and argue it out and win folks over, one mind and heart and vote at a time. And yes, that's sometimes frustrating.

We knew, on a journey like this, there were going to be setbacks, there were going to be detours. And there would be times where we stumble. I love when I hear people say, "Well, you know, he ran such a perfect campaign." What campaign were you on? [*Laughter*] It didn't feel perfect to me. [*Laughter*] I've got the scars to prove it. [*Laughter*] We screwed up all the time.

But what we knew was that at every juncture in our history, when our future was on the line, when our country was at a crossroads like we are now, we figured it out. We somehow managed to transform ourselves from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy and then to an information economy. We somehow managed to absorb new waves of immigrants. We managed to take on the stain of slavery. We managed to figure out how to make sure women were full participants in our democracy. We managed to move forward not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans, as one people, as one Nation.

So when you hear people say that our problems are too big, when you hear people say we aren't going to bring about the changes that we seek, I want you to think about all the progress that we've made. I want you to think about all the unfinished business that lies ahead. And I want you to remember and remind everybody else those three simple words that we talked about in 2008 that apply right now as much as they did then: Yes, we can.

Thank you, Boston. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:41 p.m. at the Boston Center for the Arts. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; W. Ray Allen, guard, and William F. Russell, former center, National Basketball Association's Boston Celtics; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Executive Order Blocking Property of Senior Officials of the Government of Syria
May 18, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that takes additional steps with respect to the Government of Syria's continuous escalation of violence against the people of Syria—including through attacks on protestors, arrests and harassment of protestors and political activists, and repression of democratic change, overseen and executed by numerous elements of the Syrian government—and with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, and in Executive Order 13460 of February 13, 2008, and expanded in scope in Executive Order 13572 of April 29, 2011.

In Executive Order 13338, the President found that the actions of the Government of Syria constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and declared a national emergency to deal with that threat. To address that threat and to implement the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–175), the President in Executive Order 13338 blocked the property of certain persons and imposed additional prohibitions on certain transactions with respect to Syria. In Executive Order 13572, I expanded the scope of that national emergency and imposed additional sanctions.

The order blocks the property and interests in property of persons listed in the Annex to the order. The order also provides criteria for designations, and the resulting blocking of the property and interests in property, of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to be a senior official of the Government of Syria;
- to be an agency or instrumentality of the Government of Syria, or owned or con-

trolled, directly or indirectly, by the Government of Syria or by an official or officials of the Government of Syria;

- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or
- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA, as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. I have also delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the authority to determine that circumstances no longer warrant the blocking of the property and interests in property of a person listed in the Annex to the order, and to take necessary action to give effect to that determination.

The order was effective at 1:00 p.m. eastern daylight time on May 18, 2011. All executive agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Brookline, Massachusetts

May 18, 2011

The President. Thank you. All right, everybody, have a seat. That food looks too good to let it get cold. [*Laughter*]

To Frank [John]* and Eileen, first of all, I remember that drive, and I came away just having enjoyed the conversation. And that's not always the case when you're out there on the campaign trail. You're doing work. But I couldn't think of a more wonderful couple and people who I would've wanted to have dinner with even if I weren't running for office. [*Laughter*] And for you guys to open up your homes like this is just remarkable. I do appreciate you padding the crowd. Basically, half of these folks are your children or grandchildren based on what I saw earlier. [*Laughter*] But thank you very much.

To all the other cohosts, who worked so hard, friends that I've seen, some of whom have supported me since I ran for the United States Senate and nobody could pronounce my name. And so I appreciate all of you. To my dear friend Deval, one of the finest Governors in the country, to Tom Menino, one of the finest mayors in the country, and to Speaker DeLeo for putting up with Mayor Menino and Deval Patrick—[*laughter*]—we are grateful for you.

We live in extraordinary times. And I just came back from a large event that we did, and what was especially fun about it was Bill Russell was the person who introduced me. And they're erecting a statue for Bill Russell. He had always resisted any monument here in Boston, and the reason he agreed was because

* White House correction.

we encouraged everybody to set up a mentorship program in his name along with the statue, which is typical of who he is.

But I tried to remind people of the fact that on that night in 2008 when I was elected, I warned people that this was the beginning, not the end, that we were going to have a steep mountain to climb.

Now, we didn't realize how steep it was going to be. [*Laughter*] We didn't know at the time that we were going to go through the worst recession since the Great Depression and that we had already lost 4 million jobs in the previous 6 months and we would lose another 4 million in the few months after I was sworn in. We didn't know that the financial system would begin to melt down in ways that threatened the entire global capital system. We didn't know how severely the housing market would be hit. We didn't know that the auto industry would come this close to liquidation.

But what we did know was that the country was at a crossroads, even before the crisis had hit. What we understood was that we had gone through a decade in which corporate profits were up. On the surface it seemed that the country was growing and expanding. But if you talked to ordinary folks, day to day, they were just barely making ends meet. Incomes, wages had flatlined for a decade. In fact, they had actually declined slightly when you adjusted for inflation. And people felt as if the American Dream was slipping away. They were working harder and harder, and they felt like they were just treading water.

And there was a sense that it was no longer possible for us to do big things, that the political system had entirely bogged down, and whether it was trying to rebuild our infrastructure or make sure that we had a health care system that worked for every American or schools that taught every child, that somehow even if we understood what the answers might be technically, we just couldn't mobilize ourselves to actually bring about the changes that were needed.

And that's why I ran for President, and that's why so many of you supported me. Now, we have spent the last 2½ years cleaning up a big mess. And some of the decisions we took were tough. We had to move swiftly, we had to move boldly, and sometimes they were controversial. But an economy that was shrinking at about 6 percent is now growing again. Over the last 14 months, we've created 2 million private sector jobs, starting to recover some of those jobs that were lost during the crisis. The financial system is stable. The stock market has doubled. We're on track to enjoy in manufacturing, for example, some of the fastest growth and greatest expansion that we've seen in about a decade.

But some of those underlying challenges are still there. And so our work isn't done. Yes, we passed health care with an assist from a former Massachusetts Governor. [*Laughter*] Great idea. [*Laughter*] But we still have to implement it.

And implementation is going to be difficult because part of our task is not just making sure that 30 million people have health care, but that we're starting to get a better bang for our buck: that we're driving down our costs, just like Massachusetts is now working on; working on delivery system reform; making sure that the 20 percent of patients who are chronically ill, but account for 80 percent of the costs, that they're getting better care; making sure that health IT is working so that the system is more efficient and has less waste. That's going to require us rolling up our sleeves and paying attention to the hard details of policy.

We've made progress when it comes to energy: made the largest investment in clean energy in our history through the Recovery Act and have created entire industries. The advanced battery manufacturing sector used—we used to have 2 percent of the world's share of advanced batteries. We are now on track to have 40 percent of that market as a consequence of the investments we made. You're seeing solar panels and wind turbines manufacturing. Deval was just telling me that the wind testing facility just got set up, and you already have a backlog of——

Governor Deval L. Patrick of Massachusetts. A year and a half.

The President. ——a year and a half for folks who want to use this, creating jobs here in

Massachusetts, but also creating clean energy. But we're nowhere near where we need to be. Folks are getting hammered when it comes to the cost of gas at the pump. But we go through cycles of shock when gas prices go up and then trance when they come back down, and we just keep on doing the same things that we've been doing for the last 40, 50 years.

We're—we've made enormous progress when it comes to education. My Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, has been barnstorming for change all across the country. And as a result of the work that we did with No Child Left Behind, making modifications with a program called Race to the Top, we've actually seen reforms in 40 States, where suddenly folks are saying, let's bring teachers together with administrators, with parents; let's focus on accountability; let's focus on developing teachers that are excelling in front of the classrooms so that our kids can excel. And we're starting to see progress.

But we've still got so much work to do. We've still got schools where half the kids are dropping out. We've still got schools where only 1 out of 10 students can read at grade level or perform math at an acceptable level. We've got a lot more work to do.

We've made huge investments in science and research. I was just mentioning to Tom and Deval on the ride over here that the possibilities of developing an electric car that gets 300 miles a gallon, that barely uses any gasoline, that is—that could be as close as 5 years away, if we make the investments. And Japan is making the investments, South Korea is making the investments, China is making those investments, Europe is making those investments. I want what will be a revolutionary technology that will determine who basically runs the auto industry, I want that to happen here in the United States of America. So we're going to have to keep on making investments in basic research. We've got a lot more work to do.

And internationally, we've brought 100,000 troops back from Iraq. We are starting in 2 months, going to be transitioning our troops out of Afghanistan. And we have put Al Qaida on its heels.

But we've got—still got enormous challenges in terms of our security. We've got enormous challenges when it comes to dealing with international issues like climate change and poverty around the world. We've got a huge stake in making sure that countries like Egypt are successful in their transition to democracy. And we have not made the kind of progress that we need to make on peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

So I hope you guys aren't tired, because what I said in 2008 remains true. What we have been able to do is to avert catastrophe. But that bigger dream, that higher mountain, we still have to climb. And it's going to require enormous effort.

And part of the reason it's going to require enormous effort is because we have an opposition party, the other side, which has just a fundamentally different vision about where America should go. And this budget debate that we're having in Washington clarifies that. I do not doubt their love for our country. I do not doubt their intentions. But they have a fundamentally different vision about how we move America forward.

And if you look at the budget documents that they've put forward, it is a small, shrunken vision of America, one in which we can't make investments in basic research, one in which we can't afford to make sure that people aren't bankrupt if they get sick. A vision that says that Medicare is voucherized and seniors may have to pay $6,000 more per person for the health care that they receive, where we're slashing Medicaid so that poor kids or middle class families who've got a child who's autistic or some—has some other disability is not going to be cared for.

That's not the America I believe in. That's not who we are. We do big things. We are generous, and we are optimistic. And so I think this will be a very clarifying debate between now and November of next year. And I am confident that if we get our message out, that we will win. Because I think for all the distractions that the American people experience, the

fact that a lot of them are too busy to pay attention to the details of politics, they've got good instincts. And they're—they remember what it took for them to achieve their American Dream. And they remember their parents or their grandparents or their great-grandparents coming over here from someplace else and having to work hard to give a better life for their kids.

And each of them have some story like Jack's story or Deval's story of coming up the hard way and working for everything you got, but knowing that if you did work hard and you met your responsibilities, then someday you might be able to watch your grandchildren running around in a house that you couldn't have imagined having when you were a kid, or being a Governor when there were no Governors like you when you were a kid. Right?

That's what this election is about. That's what this campaign is about. And so I hope that all of you are all in, because it's going to be hard. There will be some setbacks. It will be rocky occasionally. It may not have all the mystique of our first race because I'm older and grayer. [*Laughter*] We're not as new. But that vision is the same. My commitments are the same. And I know yours are as well.

So thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:48 p.m. at the residence of Eileen M. and John M. Connors, Jr. In his remarks, he referred to Robert A. DeLeo, speaker, Massachusetts State House; William F. Russell, former center, National Basketball Association's Boston Celtics; and former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts.

Remarks at the Department of State
May 19, 2011

Thank you. Please have a seat. Thank you very much. I want to begin by thanking Hillary Clinton, who has traveled so much these last 6 months that she is approaching a new landmark: 1 million frequent-flier miles. [*Laughter*] I count on Hillary every single day, and I believe that she will go down as one of the finest Secretaries of State in our Nation's history.

The State Department is a fitting venue to mark a new chapter in American diplomacy. For 6 months, we have witnessed an extraordinary change taking place in the Middle East and North Africa. Square by square, town by town, country by country, the people have risen up to demand their basic human rights. Two leaders have stepped aside. More may follow. And though these countries may be a great distance from our shores, we know that our own future is bound to this region by the forces of economics and security, by history and by faith.

Today I want to talk about this change, the forces that are driving it, and how we can respond in a way that advances our values and strengthens our security.

Now, already, we've done much to shift our foreign policy following a decade defined by two costly conflicts. After years of war in Iraq, we've removed 100,000 American troops and ended our combat mission there. In Afghanistan, we've broken the Taliban's momentum, and this July we will begin to bring our troops home and continue a transition to Afghan lead. And after years of war against Al Qaida and its affiliates, we have dealt Al Qaida a huge blow by killing its leader, Usama bin Laden.

Bin Laden was no martyr. He was a mass murderer who offered a message of hate: an insistence that Muslims had to take up arms against the West and that violence against men, women, and children was the only path to change. He rejected democracy and individual rights for Muslims in favor of violent extremism. His agenda focused on what he could destroy, not what he could build.

Bin Laden and his murderous vision won some adherents. But even before his death, Al Qaida was losing its struggle for relevance as the overwhelming majority of people saw that the slaughter of innocents did not answer their cries for a better life. By the time we found bin

Laden, Al Qaida's agenda had come to be seen by the vast majority of the region as a dead end, and the people of the Middle East and North Africa had taken their future into their own hands.

That story of self-determination began 6 months ago in Tunisia. On December 17, a young vendor named Mohammed Bouazizi was devastated when a police officer confiscated his cart. This was not unique. It's the same kind of humiliation that takes place every day in many parts of the world: the relentless tyranny of governments that deny their citizens dignity. Only this time, something different happened. After local officials refused to hear his complaints, this young man, who had never been particularly active in politics, went to the headquarters of the provincial government, doused himself in fuel, and lit himself on fire.

There are times in the course of history when the actions of ordinary citizens spark movements for change because they speak to a longing for freedom that has been building up for years. In America, think of the defiance of those patriots in Boston who refused to pay taxes to a king or the dignity of Rosa Parks as she sat courageously in her seat. So it was in Tunisia, as that vendor's act of desperation tapped into the frustration felt throughout the country. Hundreds of protesters took to the streets, then thousands. And in the face of batons and sometimes bullets, they refused to go home, day after day, week after week, until a dictator of more than two decades finally left power.

The story of this revolution, and the ones that followed, should not have come as a surprise. The nations of the Middle East and North Africa won their independence long ago, but in too many places their people did not. In too many countries, power has been concentrated in the hands of a few. In too many countries, a citizen like that young vendor had nowhere to turn: no honest judiciary to hear his case, no independent media to give him voice, no credible political party to represent his views, no free and fair election where he could choose his leader.

And this lack of self-determination—the chance to make your life what you will—has applied to the region's economy as well. Yes, some nations are blessed with wealth in oil and gas, and that has led to pockets of prosperity. But in a global economy based on knowledge, based on innovation, no development strategy can be based solely upon what comes out of the ground. Nor can people reach their potential when you cannot start a business without paying a bribe.

In the face of these challenges, too many leaders in the region tried to direct their people's grievances elsewhere. The West was blamed as the source of all ills, a half-century after the end of colonialism. Antagonism toward Israel became the only acceptable outlet for political expression. Divisions of tribe, ethnicity, and religious sect were manipulated as a means of holding on to power or taking it away from somebody else.

But the events of the past 6 months show us that strategies of repression and strategies of diversion will not work anymore. Satellite television and the Internet provide a window into the wider world, a world of astonishing progress in places like India and Indonesia and Brazil. Cell phones and social networks allow young people to connect and organize like never before. And so a new generation has emerged, and their voices tell us that change cannot be denied.

In Cairo, we heard the voice of the young mother who said, "It's like I can finally breathe fresh air for the first time." In Sanaa, we heard the students who chanted, "The night must come to an end." In Benghazi, we heard the engineer who said, "Our words are free now. It's a feeling you can't explain." In Damascus, we heard the young man who said, "After the first yelling, the first shout, you feel dignity."

Those shouts of human dignity are being heard across the region. And through the moral force of nonviolence, the people of the region have achieved more change in 6 months than terrorists have accomplished in decades.

Of course, change of this magnitude does not come easily. In our day and age, a time of 24-hour news cycles and constant communication,

people expect the transformation of the region to be resolved in a matter of weeks. But it will be years before this story reaches its end. Along the way, there will be good days and there will bad days. In some places, change will be swift; in others, gradual. And as we've already seen, calls for change may give way, in some cases, to fierce contests for power.

The question before us is what role America will play as this story unfolds. For decades, the United States has pursued a set of core interests in the region: countering terrorism and stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, securing the free flow of commerce and safeguarding the security of the region, standing up for Israel's security and pursuing Arab-Israeli peace.

We will continue to do these things, with the firm belief that America's interests are not hostile to people's hopes, they're essential to them. We believe that no one benefits from a nuclear arms race in the region or Al Qaida's brutal attacks. We believe people everywhere would see their economies crippled by a cutoff in energy supplies. As we did in the Gulf war, we will not tolerate aggression across borders, and we will keep our commitments to friends and partners.

Yet we must acknowledge that a strategy based solely upon the narrow pursuit of these interests will not fill an empty stomach or allow someone to speak their mind. Moreover, failure to speak to the broader aspirations of ordinary people will only feed the suspicion that has festered for years that the United States pursues our interests at their expense. Given that this mistrust runs both ways, as Americans have been seared by hostage-taking and violent rhetoric and terrorist attacks that have killed thousands of our citizens, a failure to change our approach threatens a deepening spiral of division between the United States and the Arab world.

And that's why, 2 years ago in Cairo, I began to broaden our engagement based upon mutual interests and mutual respect. I believed then, and I believe now, that we have a stake not just in the stability of nations, but in the self-determination of individuals. The status quo is not sustainable. Societies held together by fear and repression may offer the illusion of stability for a time, but they are built upon fault lines that will eventually tear asunder.

So we face a historic opportunity. We have the chance to show that America values the dignity of the street vendor in Tunisia more than the raw power of the dictator. There must be no doubt that the United States of America welcomes change that advances self-determination and opportunity. Yes, there will be perils that accompany this moment of promise. But after decades of accepting the world as it is in the region, we have a chance to pursue the world as it should be.

Of course, as we do, we must proceed with a sense of humility. It's not America that put people into the streets of Tunis or Cairo, it was the people themselves who launched these movements, and it's the people themselves that must ultimately determine their outcome.

Not every country will follow our particular form of representative democracy, and there will be times when our short-term interests don't align perfectly with our long-term vision for the region. But we can, and we will, speak out for a set of core principles, principles that have guided our response to the events over the past 6 months.

The United States opposes the use of violence and repression against the people of the region.

The United States supports a set of universal rights. And these rights include free speech, the freedom of peaceful assembly, the freedom of religion, equality for men and women under the rule of law, and the right to choose your own leaders, whether you live in Baghdad or Damascus, Sanaa or Tehran.

And we support political and economic reform in the Middle East and North Africa that can meet the legitimate aspirations of ordinary people throughout the region.

Our support for these principles is not a secondary interest. Today I want to make it clear that it is a top priority that must be translated into concrete actions and supported by all of the diplomatic, economic, and strategic tools at our disposal.

Let me be specific. First, it will be the policy of the United States to promote reform across the region and to support transitions to democracy. That effort begins in Egypt and Tunisia, where the stakes are high, as Tunisia was at the vanguard of this democratic wave and Egypt is both a longstanding partner and the Arab world's largest nation. Both nations can set a strong example through free and fair elections, a vibrant civil society, accountable and effective democratic institutions, and responsible regional leadership. But our support must also extend to nations where transitions have yet to take place.

Unfortunately, in too many countries, calls for change have thus far been answered by violence. The most extreme example is Libya, where Muammar Qadhafi launched a war against his own people, promising to hunt them down like rats. As I said when the United States joined an international coalition to intervene, we cannot prevent every injustice perpetrated by a regime against its people, and we have learned from our experience in Iraq just how costly and difficult it is to try to impose regime change by force, no matter how well intentioned it may be.

But in Libya, we saw the prospect of imminent massacre. We had a mandate for action and heard the Libyan people's call for help. Had we not acted along with our NATO allies and regional coalition partners, thousands would have been killed. The message would have been clear: Keep power by killing as many people as it takes. Now time is working against Qadhafi. He does not have control over his country. The opposition has organized a legitimate and credible interim council. And when Qadhafi inevitably leaves or is forced from power, decades of provocation will come to an end and the transition to a democratic Libya can proceed.

While Libya has faced violence on the greatest scale, it's not the only place where leaders have turned to repression to remain in power. Most recently, the Syrian regime has chosen the path of murder and the mass arrests of its citizens. The United States has condemned these actions, and working with the international community, we have stepped up our sanctions on the Syrian regime, including sanctions announced yesterday on President Asad and those around him.

The Syrian people have shown their courage in demanding a transition to democracy. President Asad now has a choice: He can lead that transition or get out of the way. The Syrian Government must stop shooting demonstrators and allow peaceful protests. It must release political prisoners and stop unjust arrests. It must allow human rights monitors to have access to cities like Dara'a and start a serious dialogue to advance a democratic transition. Otherwise, President Asad and his regime will continue to be challenged from within and will continue to be isolated abroad.

So far, Syria has followed its Iranian ally, seeking assistance from Tehran in the tactics of suppression. And this speaks to the hypocrisy of the Iranian regime, which says it stands for the rights of protesters abroad, yet represses its own people at home. Let's remember that the first peaceful protests in the region were in the streets of Tehran, where the Government brutalized women and men and threw innocent people into jail. We still hear the chants echo from the rooftops of Tehran. The image of a young woman dying in the streets is still seared in our memory. And we will continue to insist that the Iranian people deserve their universal rights and a government that does not smother their aspirations.

Now, our opposition to Iran's intolerance and Iran's repressive measures, as well as its illicit nuclear program and its support of terror, is well known. But if America is to be credible, we must acknowledge that at times our friends in the region have not all reacted to the demands for consistent change—with change that's consistent with the principles that I've outlined today. That's true in Yemen, where President Salih needs to follow through on his commitment to transfer power. And that's true today in Bahrain.

Bahrain is a longstanding partner, and we are committed to its security. We recognize that Iran has tried to take advantage of the turmoil

there and that the Bahraini Government has a legitimate interest in the rule of law.

Nevertheless, we have insisted both publicly and privately that mass arrests and brute force are at odds with the universal rights of Bahrain's citizens, and we will—and such steps will not make legitimate calls for reform go away. The only way forward is for the Government and opposition to engage in a dialogue, and you can't have a real dialogue when parts of the peaceful opposition are in jail. The Government must create the conditions for dialogue, and the opposition must participate to forge a just future for all Bahrainis.

Indeed, one of the broader lessons to be drawn from this period is that sectarian divides need not lead to conflict. In Iraq, we see the promise of a multiethnic, multisectarian democracy. The Iraqi people have rejected the perils of political violence in favor of a democratic process, even as they've taken full responsibility for their own security. Of course, like all new democracies, they will face setbacks. But Iraq is poised to play a key role in the region if it continues its peaceful progress. And as they do, we will be proud to stand with them as a steadfast partner.

So in the months ahead, America must use all our influence to encourage reform in the region. Even as we acknowledge that each country is different, we need to speak honestly about the principles that we believe in, with friend and foe alike. Our message is simple: If you take the risks that reform entails, you will have the full support of the United States.

We must also build on our efforts to broaden our engagement beyond elites, so that we reach the people who will shape the future, particularly young people. We will continue to make good on the commitments that I made in Cairo to build networks of entrepreneurs and expand exchanges in education, to foster cooperation in science and technology and combat disease. Across the region, we intend to provide assistance to civil society, including those that may not be officially sanctioned and who speak uncomfortable truths. And we will use the technology to connect with and listen to the voices of the people.

For the fact is, real reform does not come at the ballot box alone. Through our efforts, we must support those basic rights to speak your mind and access information. We will support open access to the Internet and the right of journalists to be heard, whether it's a big news organization or a lone blogger. In the 21st century, information is power, the truth cannot be hidden, and the legitimacy of governments will ultimately depend on active and informed citizens.

Such open discourse is important even if what is said does not square with our worldview. Let me be clear: America respects the right of all peaceful and law-abiding voices to be heard, even if we disagree with them. And sometimes we profoundly disagree with them.

We look forward to working with all who embrace genuine and inclusive democracy. What we will oppose is an attempt by any group to restrict the rights of others and to hold power through coercion and not consent. Because democracy depends not only on elections, but also strong and accountable institutions and the respect for the rights of minorities.

Such tolerance is particularly important when it comes to religion. In Tahrir Square, we heard Egyptians from all walks of life chant, "Muslims, Christians, we are one." America will work to see that this spirit prevails, that all faiths are respected, and that bridges are built among them. In a region that was the birthplace of three world religions, intolerance can lead only to suffering and stagnation. And for this season of change to succeed, Coptic Christians must have the right to worship freely in Cairo, just as Shi'a must never have their mosques destroyed in Bahrain.

What is true for religious minorities is also true when it comes to the rights of women. History shows that countries are more prosperous and more peaceful when women are empowered. And that's why we will continue to insist that universal rights apply to women as well as men: by focusing assistance on child and maternal health, by helping women to teach or start a business, by standing up for the right of women to have their voices heard and to run for office. The region will never reach its full potential

when more than half of its population is prevented from achieving their full potential.

Now, even as we promote political reform, even as we promote human rights in the region, our efforts can't stop there. So the second way that we must support positive change in the region is through our efforts to advance economic development for nations that are transitioning to democracy.

After all, politics alone has not put protesters into the streets. The tipping point for so many people is the more constant concern of putting food on the table and providing for a family. Too many people in the region wake up with few expectations other than making it through the day, perhaps hoping that their luck will change. Throughout the region, many young people have a solid education, but closed economies leave them unable to find a job. Entrepreneurs are brimming with ideas, but corruption leaves them unable to profit from those ideas.

The greatest untapped resource in the Middle East and North Africa is the talent of its people. In the recent protests, we see that talent on display, as people harness technology to move the world. It's no coincidence that one of the leaders of Tahrir Square was an executive for Google. That energy now needs to be channeled, in country after country, so that economic growth can solidify the accomplishments of the street. For just as democratic revolutions can be triggered by a lack of individual opportunity, successful democratic transitions depend upon an expansion of growth and broad-based prosperity.

So drawing from what we've learned around the world, we think it's important to focus on trade, not just aid, on investment, not just assistance. The goal must be a model in which protectionism gives way to openness, the reins of commerce pass from the few to the many, and the economy generates jobs for the young. America's support for democracy will therefore be based on ensuring financial stability, promoting reform, and integrating competitive markets with each other and the global economy. And we're going to start with Tunisia and Egypt.

First, we've asked the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to present a plan at next week's G–8 summit for what needs to be done to stabilize and modernize the economies of Tunisia and Egypt. Together, we must help them recover from the disruptions of their democratic upheaval and support the governments that will be elected later this year. And we are urging other countries to help Egypt and Tunisia meet its near-term financial needs.

Second, we do not want a democratic Egypt to be saddled by the debts of its past. So we will relieve a democratic Egypt of up to $1 billion in debt and work with our Egyptian partners to invest these resources to foster growth and entrepreneurship. We will help Egypt regain access to markets by guaranteeing $1 billion in borrowing that is needed to finance infrastructure and job creation. And we will help newly democratic governments recover assets that were stolen.

Third, we're working with Congress to create enterprise funds to invest in Tunisia and Egypt. And these will be modeled on funds that supported the transitions in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall. OPIC will soon launch a $2 billion facility to support private investment across the region. And we will work with the allies to refocus the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development so that it provides the same support for democratic transitions and economic modernization in the Middle East and North Africa as it has in Europe.

Fourth, the United States will launch a comprehensive trade and investment partnership initiative in the Middle East and North Africa. If you take out oil exports, this entire region of over 400 million people exports roughly the same amount as Switzerland. So we will work with the EU to facilitate more trade within the region, build on existing agreements to promote integration with U.S. and European markets, and open the door for those countries who adopt high standards of reform and trade liberalization to construct a regional trade arrangement. And just as EU membership served as an incentive for reform in Europe, so

should the vision of a modern and prosperous economy create a powerful force for reform in the Middle East and North Africa.

Prosperity also requires tearing down walls that stand in the way of progress: the corruption of elites who steal from their people, the redtape that stops an idea from becoming a business, the patronage that distributes wealth based on tribe or sect. We will help governments meet international obligations and invest efforts at anticorruption by working with parliamentarians who are developing reforms and activists who use technology to increase transparency and hold government accountable.

Politics and human rights, economic reform. Let me conclude by talking about another cornerstone of our approach to the region, and that relates to the pursuit of peace.

For decades, the conflict between Israelis and Arabs has cast a shadow over the region. For Israelis, it has meant living with the fear that their children could be blown up on a bus or by rockets fired at their homes, as well as the pain of knowing that other children in the region are taught to hate them. For Palestinians, it has meant suffering the humiliation of occupation and never living in a nation of their own. Moreover, this conflict has come with a larger cost to the Middle East, as it impedes partnerships that could bring greater security and prosperity and empowerment to ordinary people.

For over 2 years, my administration has worked with the parties and the international community to end this conflict, building on decades of work by previous administrations. Yet expectations have gone unmet. Israeli settlement activity continues. Palestinians have walked away from talks. The world looks at a conflict that has grinded on and on and on and sees nothing but stalemate. Indeed, there are those who argue that with all the change and uncertainty in the region, it is simply not possible to move forward now.

I disagree. At a time when the people of the Middle East and North Africa are casting off the burdens of the past, the drive for a lasting peace that ends the conflict and resolves all claims is more urgent than ever. That's certainly true for the two parties involved.

For the Palestinians, efforts to delegitimize Israel will end in failure. Symbolic actions to isolate Israel at the United Nations in September won't create an independent state. Palestinian leaders will not achieve peace or prosperity if Hamas insists on a path of terror and rejection. And Palestinians will never realize their independence by denying the right of Israel to exist.

As for Israel, our friendship is rooted deeply in a shared history and shared values. Our commitment to Israel's security is unshakeable. And we will stand against attempts to single it out for criticism in international forums. But precisely because of our friendship, it's important that we tell the truth: The status quo is unsustainable, and Israel too must act boldly to advance a lasting peace.

The fact is, a growing number of Palestinians live west of the Jordan River. Technology will make it harder for Israel to defend itself. A region undergoing profound change will lead to populism in which millions of people—not just one or two leaders—must believe peace is possible. The international community is tired of an endless process that never produces an outcome. The dream of a Jewish and democratic state cannot be fulfilled with permanent occupation.

Now, ultimately, it is up to the Israelis and Palestinians to take action. No peace can be imposed upon them, not by the United States, not by anybody else. But endless delay won't make the problem go away. What America and the international community can do is to state frankly what everyone knows: A lasting peace will involve two states for two peoples—Israel as a Jewish state and the homeland for the Jewish people and the state of Palestine as the homeland for the Palestinian people—each state enjoying self-determination, mutual recognition, and peace.

So while the core issues of the conflict must be negotiated, the basis of those negotiations is clear: a viable Palestine, a secure Israel. The United States believes that negotiations should result in two states, with permanent Palestin-

ian borders with Israel, Jordan, and Egypt, and permanent Israeli borders with Palestine. We believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps, so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states. The Palestinian people must have the right to govern themselves and reach their full potential in a sovereign and contiguous state.

As for security, every state has the right to self-defense, and Israel must be able to defend itself, by itself, against any threat. Provisions must also be robust enough to prevent a resurgence of terrorism, to stop the infiltration of weapons, and to provide effective border security. The full and phased withdrawal of Israeli military forces should be coordinated with the assumption of Palestinian security responsibility in a sovereign, nonmilitarized state. And the duration of this transition period must be agreed, and the effectiveness of security arrangements must be demonstrated.

These principles provide a foundation for negotiations. Palestinians should know the territorial outlines of their state; Israelis should know that their basic security concerns will be met. I'm aware that these steps alone will not resolve the conflict, because two wrenching and emotional issues will remain: the future of Jerusalem and the fate of Palestinian refugees. But moving forward now on the basis of territory and security provides a foundation to resolve those two issues in a way that is just and fair and that respects the rights and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians.

Now, let me say this: Recognizing that negotiations need to begin with the issues of territory and security does not mean that it will be easy to come back to the table. In particular, the recent announcement of an agreement between Fatah and Hamas raises profound and legitimate questions for Israel: How can one negotiate with a party that has shown itself unwilling to recognize your right to exist? And in the weeks and months to come, Palestinian leaders will have to provide a credible answer to that question. Meanwhile, the United States, our Quartet partners, and the Arab States will need to continue every effort to get beyond the current impasse.

I recognize how hard this will be. Suspicion and hostility has been passed on for generations, and at times, it has hardened. But I'm convinced that the majority of Israelis and Palestinians would rather look to the future than be trapped in the past. We see that spirit in the Israeli father whose son was killed by Hamas, who helped start an organization that brought together Israelis and Palestinians who had lost loved ones. That father said, "I gradually realized that the only hope for progress was to recognize the face of the conflict." We see it in the actions of a Palestinian who lost three daughters to Israeli shells in Gaza. "I have the right to feel angry," he said. "So many people were expecting me to hate. My answer to them is, I shall not hate. Let us hope," he said, "for tomorrow."

That is the choice that must be made—not simply in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but across the entire region—a choice between hate and hope, between the shackles of the past and the promise of the future. It's a choice that must be made by leaders and by the people, and it's a choice that will define the future of a region that served as the cradle of civilization and a crucible of strife.

For all the challenges that lie ahead, we see many reasons to be hopeful. In Egypt, we see it in the efforts of young people who led protests. In Syria, we see it in the courage of those who brave bullets while chanting, "Peaceful, peaceful." In Benghazi, a city threatened with destruction, we see it in the courthouse square where people gather to celebrate the freedoms that they had never known. Across the region, those rights that we take for granted are being claimed with joy by those who are prying lose the grip of an iron fist.

For the American people, the scenes of upheaval in the region may be unsettling, but the forces driving it are not unfamiliar. Our own nation was founded through a rebellion against an empire. Our people fought a painful civil war that extended freedom and dignity to those who were enslaved. And I would not be standing here today unless past generations turned to the moral force of nonviolence as a

way to perfect our Union, organizing, marching, protesting peacefully together to make real those words that declared our Nation: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

Those words must guide our response to the change that is transforming the Middle East and North Africa, words which tell us that repression will fail and that tyrants will fall and that every man and woman is endowed with certain inalienable rights.

It will not be easy. There's no straight line to progress, and hardship always accompanies a season of hope. But the United States of America was founded on the belief that people should govern themselves. And now we cannot hesitate to stand squarely on the side of those who are reaching for their rights, knowing that their success will bring about a world that is more peaceful, more stable, and more just.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia; former President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; Wael Ghonim, former executive, Google Inc., who was detained by Egyptian authorities for 10 days during the protests against the rule of former President Mubarak; Yitzhak Frankenthal, founder of the Parents Circle-Families Forum, an organization that seeks to bring together Israeli and Palestinian families that have lost loved ones to violence; and Ezzeldeen Abu al-Aish, a Palestinian doctor who lost three daughters to Israeli shelling in Gaza.

Remarks to the Women's Leadership Forum
May 19, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody! Hello, hello, hello! It is good to be with all of you. First of all, how about the outstanding new chair of the DNC, Debbie Wasserman Schultz? Give it up for her. We've got a couple of other outstanding Members of Congress who are here: Senator Kirsten Gillibrand is here, and Representative Donna Edwards is in the house.

Now, I was a little confused when they told me I was coming here to address the Women's Leadership Forum, because I address a women's leadership forum every night at dinner. [*Laughter*] I just left a women's leadership forum. [*Laughter*] I have Michelle, Malia, Sasha, my mother-in-law. [*Laughter*] It's just me and Bo—[*laughter*]—trying to get a word in edgewise. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. We're going to let you talk.

The President. Oh—that's a change. [*Laughter*] The last time I spoke to the Women's Leadership Forum was back in 2008. And a lot has changed since then. I'm a little grayer. [*Laughter*] Back then, we were in the middle of the worst recession since the Great Depression, a recession that would ultimately cost us 8 million jobs. Today, we've got a recovery that's taken hold. Our economy has now been growing for the past five quarters. We've created over 2 million private sector jobs in the last 14 months, more than three-quarters of a million private sector jobs in the last 3 months alone. Each of the Big Three automakers are now making a profit for the first time in years.

So obviously, the economy as a whole has an enormous impact on women and everything that women are doing to hold families together during extraordinarily rough times. But we've done a few other things. Along the way, we appointed two more women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina on the Supreme Court. We launched a competition called Race to the Top that's being touted all across the country for bringing about changes people couldn't imagine at the local level in schools, and it's also helping to recruit more women into the math and science professions, which we think is absolutely critical.

We finally passed health care reform to make sure that health care is affordable and available for every single American in the United States. And as part of reform, insurance

companies will cover preventive care like mammograms with no out-of-pocket costs. And it will be illegal to charge women more than men just because of their gender.

So we're making some progress, but we've still got a long way to go. For all the strides that we've made, women still hold fewer than 20 percent of the seats in Congress, which explains something. [*Laughter*] Women still only make up 3 percent of the Fortune 500 CEOs. Women are still earning only about 77 cents for every dollar that a man is earning. That's why the first bill that I signed into law was the Lilly Ledbetter bill, to make sure that women get an equal day's pay for an equal day's work. That's not too much to ask.

I was disappointed when another important bill to help end pay disparities, the "Paycheck Fairness Act," failed by just two votes when not a single Republican would vote for it in the Senate. So I'm going to keep on fighting to pass that piece of legislation.

Because SBA loans are three to five times as likely to go to women and minority business owners as conventional loans, we've invested in the SBA. And Karen Mills, our SBA Administrator, is doing an outstanding job. We are making sure that women entrepreneurs have the support they need not only to start a business, but to expand a business and create new jobs across America in the process.

Because about one in five women will be sexually assaulted in college, Vice President Joe Biden is working with our Adviser on Violence Against Women, Lynn Rosenthal, to help make sure our universities are fulfilling their obligation under Federal law to stop the scourge of sexual assault on college campuses across America.

We created the White House Council on Women and Girls, led by our very own Valerie Jarrett. We created the Office of Global Women's Issues at the State Department, led by Ambassador Melanne Verveer, to make sure our administration is focused on the issues that are facing women and girls here and around the world.

Overseas, we lifted the global gag rule that restricted women's access to family planning. We're making important investments in child and maternal health. And we are working to stem the unspeakable cruelties that are being perpetrated against girls and women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

When it comes to our budget, we need to live within our means, and we've got to cut what we don't need so that we can afford to do the things that we have to do to grow our economy. But what I told the House Republicans during the budget fight is that I'm not willing to defund Planned Parenthood. I'm not willing to sacrifice basic health care and lifesaving preventive care for millions of women.

Now, the cause of women aren't just important to me as President, they are personal. I saw my grandmother hit a glass ceiling at the bank where she worked for years. She could have been the best bank president they ever had, but she never got that chance. I saw how Michelle was made to balance work and family when she was a vice president at a hospital. As a father, I want to make sure that my daughters and all of our daughters have the chance to be anything that they want. That's the America that we believe in. That's the America we're fighting for.

So to all of you who are activists in your communities, in your neighborhoods, in your work places, I want to say thank you for everything that you've already done to help advance the cause of justice and equality and prosperity and fairness. But I also want to underscore that we are not close to being finished. We are not close to being finished. Back in 2008, on that night in Grant Park, I told everybody, this is not the end, this is the beginning. And I warned everybody we were going to have a steep hill to climb. Change is never easy. And change certainly is not easy in a democracy because people argue, people have different points of view. That's part of what makes a democracy vital and healthy.

But we've made enormous strides over the last 2½ years. And that shouldn't be a cause for complacency, but it should give us enormous confidence that we can make even more changes over the next 5½ years. As long as each and every one of you continue to be involved, continue to be engaged, continue to

speak out, I promise I will be right there with you, every step of the way.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:02 p.m. at the Grand Hyatt Washington hotel. In his remarks, he referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser
May 19, 2011

So, first of all, if you want to get something done, you put a woman in charge—[*laughter*]—of the DNC. Debbie is going to do an outstanding job. She has been a leader in Congress on so many different issues. She's got energy, she's got verve, she's got drive. She doesn't take any guff from anybody. [*Laughter*] And she does it all; it's like the story about Ginger Rogers, right? She—although, I don't know—I do think her heels are pretty high. [*Laughter*] She's doing it all backward, in heels, and looking after a couple of kids. [*Laughter*] So we are just so grateful for her to be willing to take on this enormous assignment.

I want to thank John for hosting us. Where did John go? John has been a great friend for a long time, since before people could actually pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] For him to open up his gorgeous house is so appreciated.

And I want to thank all of you for being here. This is like a little reunion, because as I look around the table, I see extraordinary friends from all across the country, from Maine to Florida to California to—and everywhere in between. And so many of you worked so hard for us back in 2008. I would not be in a position to work on all the extraordinary issues and challenges that we face had it not been for your faith in me and your commitment. And so to all of you, I want to say thank you.

Now, I feel a little bit of pressure, because I understand that you heard Michelle speak today. [*Laughter*] And I try not to follow her. [*Laughter*] I was hoping that there would be enough separation so that you would have forgotten how good she was by the time I got here.

But since you all remember, I will not attempt to compete. But let me just say that that night in Grant Park in 2008, I spoke to the American people, I spoke to all the folks who had fought so hard to help me win that election, and I said to all of you, this is not the end, this is just the beginning, and that we were going to have a steep hill to climb to get to where we wanted to be.

Now, we didn't know how steep it was going to be. We didn't realize at the time the full extent and full depths of the recession that we were going to face. We didn't understand the magnitude of job loss, how close the financial system came to breakdown. We had to take a series of swift, bold, and sometimes unpopular steps to make sure that the economy didn't go over a cliff.

And as Debbie mentioned, because of the actions we took, the economy is now recovered; it's growing again. Jobs are being added again. Manufacturing has seen more growth than we've probably seen in a decade. The Big Three automakers are back on their feet, making a profit, making cars that Americans want to buy. And they're all doing it, by the way, under new laws that we created with higher fuel efficiency standards so that we become less dependent on foreign oil.

But keep in mind that our goal was never just to get back to where we were in 2007 and 2008. I ran for President because for too long, the American Dream felt like it was slipping away for too many people.

In the previous decade, wages and incomes had flatlined for too many families. And as a group of strong women here, you understand that so many of the issues that we talk about, whether it's equal pay or health care access and affordability, those are things that directly affect families in profound ways. It makes a difference as to whether people can keep their homes or whether they're going to go bankrupt if they get sick. It makes a difference if they're

going to be able to catch an illness fast enough because they've got preventive care.

The quality of our education and the ability to afford to send your kid to college is not a given for a whole bunch of families out there. Making sure that women are being trained in math and science and technology for the jobs of the future, that our daughters are able to compete and that they're getting paid what they're supposed to be getting paid when they get those jobs, those are all things that affect families in profound ways. And we haven't made all the progress that we need to make on those issues. A lot of people are still struggling out there.

And so we still have to implement health care reform. Just getting the law passed is the first step. We still have to make sure that the financial reforms that we put in place are implemented effectively. We've still got to make sure that we're creating jobs and that we are building on the extraordinary education reforms that we've made over the last several years so that all our kids are actually getting the kind of education that they deserve.

We've still got to have an energy policy in this country that makes sense, because not only will it help us deal with rising gas prices, which are uppermost on people's minds, but it's also going to make sure we can provide a planet to our children and our grandchildren that is clean and safe.

We're still going to have to get more competitive than we are right now, investing in basic science and technology, whether it's stem cell research, whether it's making sure that we're winning the race for alternative energy. So the tasks before us are enormous, and those are just the domestic ones. [*Laughter*]

Meanwhile, we've got a whole big world out there that is rapidly transforming itself. And obviously, I gave a speech today talking about how we're going to have to respond to these changes in a meaningful way.

And it's interesting, the speech that I gave today, obviously, headlines were that we stand squarely behind democratic and political reforms in the Middle East and North Africa, that we will continue to pursue a just and equitable peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

But you know what got the biggest applause in the room was when we said part of democratic reform, human rights reform in that region is unleashing the untapped power of half that population, making sure that women's rights—[*applause*].

So we've got a lot of business to do. I'm only going to be able to do it if I've got your support. This is going to be a tough race because the economy is still recovering, a lot of people are still suffering. I'm extraordinarily proud of the record that we've amassed over these last 2½ years. But some of the same underlying anxieties and frustrations, difficulties that middle class families are experiencing out there, they're still feeling. And they expect me and my administration, working with Congress in a bipartisan way whenever possible, that they expect us to deal with it.

And so part of what this campaign is going to be about is not just talking about the past, but also talking about the future. That's also, by the way, what this budget debate is going to be about, which all of you will be paying more and more attention to over the next couple of months. It really has to do with two different visions of the future. Are we going to continue to make investments that allow us to win that future—making our schools work, rebuilding our infrastructure, investing in science and technology and basic research? Are we going to continue to make sure that senior citizens have the safety net of Social Security and Medicare intact? Are we going to live within our means as a government, but do so in a way that ensures that the burden is shared among all people and not just some? And are we going to continue to have a big and bold and passionate vision about what America can be?

That's what this debate is going to be about. So I'm going to need your help. And I've said to a lot of folks, I know that in the 2½ years since I was elected, my hair has gotten a little grayer. [*Laughter*] The campaign is not going to feel exactly the same. It's not going to be as fresh and new and trendy. [*Laughter*] "Oh, I'm

supporting Obama"—back in 2008, that was a cool thing. [*Laughter*] Now: "He's the President. We see him all the time." [*Laughter*]

But the vision is the same. My enthusiasm for the job is undiminished. My faith in the American people, in their core decency, is where it was. In fact, I think it's a little stronger than it was. And so I'm confident that if we're telling our story not about—not just about what we've done, but more importantly, what remains to be done, that we're going to have 5½ more years to finish the job.

So thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:42 p.m. at the residence of John Phillips. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Deborah Wasserman Schultz, chair, Democratic National Committee.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel

May 20, 2011

President Obama. Well, let me first of all welcome again Prime Minister Netanyahu, who I think has now been here seven times during the course of my Presidency. And I want to indicate that the frequency of these meetings is an indication of the extraordinary bonds between our two countries, as is the opportunity for the Prime Minister to address Congress during his visit here. I know that's an honor that's reserved for those who have always shown themselves to be a great friend of the United States and is indicative of the friendship between our countries.

We just completed a prolonged and extremely useful conversation touching on a wide range of issues. We discussed, first of all, the changes that are sweeping the region and what has been happening in places like Egypt and Syria and how they affect the interests and the security of the United States and Israel, as well as the opportunity for prosperity, growth, and development in the Arab world.

We agreed that there is a moment of opportunity that can be seized as a consequence of the Arab Spring, but also acknowledge that there's significant perils as well, and that it's going to be important for the United States and Israel to consult closely as we see developments unfold.

I outlined for the Prime Minister some of the issues that I discussed in my speech yesterday: how important it was going to be for the United States to support political reform, support human rights, support freedom of speech, religious tolerance, and economic development, particularly in Egypt, as the largest Arab country, as well as Tunisia, the country that first started this revolutionary movement that's taking place throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

We also discussed the situation in Syria, which is obviously of acute concern to Israel, given its shared border. And I gave more details to the Prime Minister about the significant steps that we are taking to try to pressure Syria and the Asad regime to reform, including the sanctions that we placed directly on President Asad.

We continue to share our deep concerns about Iran, not only the threat that it poses to Israel, but also the threat that it poses to the region and the world if it were to develop a nuclear weapon. We updated our strategy to continue to apply pressure, both through sanctions and our other diplomatic work. And I reiterated my belief that it is unacceptable for Iran to possess a nuclear weapon.

We also discussed the hypocrisy of Iran suggesting that it somehow supports democratization in the Middle East when, in fact, they first showed the repressive nature of that regime when they responded to the own peaceful protests that took place inside Iran almost 2 years ago.

Finally, we discussed the issue of a prospective peace between Israelis and Palestinians. And I reiterated and we discussed in depth the principles that I laid out yesterday: the belief

that our ultimate goal has to be a secure Israeli state, a Jewish state, living side by side in peace and security with a contiguous, functioning, and effective Palestinian state.

Obviously, there are some differences between us in the precise formulations and language, and that's going to happen between friends. But what we are in complete accord about is that a true peace can only occur if the ultimate resolution allows Israel to defend itself against threats and that Israel's security will remain paramount in U.S. evaluations of any prospective peace deal.

I said that yesterday in the speech, and I continue to believe it. And I think that it is possible for us to shape a deal that allows Israel to secure itself, not to be vulnerable, but also allows it to resolve what has obviously been a wrenching issue for both peoples for decades now.

I also pointed out, as I said in the speech yesterday, that it is very difficult for Israel to be expected to negotiate in a serious way with a party that refuses to acknowledge its right to exist. And so for that reason I think the Palestinians are going to have to answer some very difficult questions about this agreement that's been made between Fatah and Hamas. Hamas has been and is an organization that has resorted to terror, that has refused to acknowledge Israel's rights to exist. It is not a partner for a significant, realistic peace process. And so, as I said yesterday during the speech, the Palestinians are going to have to explain how they can credibly engage in serious peace negotiations in the absence of observing the Quartet principles that have been put forward previously.

So, overall, I thought this was an extremely constructive discussion. And coming out of this discussion, I once again can reaffirm that the extraordinarily close relationship between the United States and Israel is sound and will continue, and that together, hopefully, we are going to be able to work to usher in a new period of peace and prosperity in a region that is going to be going through some very profound transformations in the coming weeks, months, and years.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Obama. Thank you very much.

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Mr. President, first I want to thank you and the First Lady for the gracious hospitality that you've shown me, my wife, and our entire delegation. We have an enduring bond of friendship between our two countries, and I appreciate the opportunity to have this meeting with you after your important speech yesterday.

We share your hope and your vision for the spread of democracy in the Middle East. I appreciate the fact that you reaffirmed once again now and in our conversation and in actual deed the commitment to Israel's security. We value your efforts to advance the peace process.

This is something that we want to have accomplished. Israel wants peace. I want peace. What we all want is a peace that will be genuine, that will hold, that will endure. And I think that the—we both agree that a peace based on illusions will crash eventually on the rocks of Middle Eastern reality and that the only peace that will endure is one that is based on reality, on unshakeable facts.

I think for there to be peace, the Palestinians will have to accept some basic realities. The first is that while Israel is prepared to make generous compromises for peace, it cannot go back to the 1967 lines, because these lines are indefensible, because they don't take into account certain changes that have taken place on the ground, demographic changes that have taken place over the last 44 years.

Remember that before 1967 Israel was all of 9 miles wide. It was half the width of the Washington Beltway. And these were not the boundaries of peace; they were the boundaries of repeated wars, because the attack on Israel was so attractive.

So we can't go back to those indefensible lines, and we're going to have to have a long-term military presence along the Jordan. I discussed this with the President and I think that we understand that Israel has certain security requirements that will have to come into place in any deal that we make.

The second is—echoes something the President just said, and that is that Israel cannot negotiate with a Palestinian Government that is backed by Hamas. Hamas, as the President said, is a terrorist organization committed to Israel's destruction. It's fired thousands of rockets on our cities, on our children. It's recently fired an antitank rocket at a yellow school bus, killing a 16-year-old boy. And Hamas has just attacked you, Mr. President, and the United States for ridding the world of bin Laden.

So Israel obviously cannot be asked to negotiate with a government that is backed by the Palestinian version of Al Qaida.

I think President Abbas has a simple choice: He has to decide if he negotiates or keeps his pact with Hamas or makes peace with Israel. And I can only express what I said to you just now, that I hope he makes the choice, the right choice, in choosing peace with Israel.

The third reality is that the Palestinian refugee problem will have to be resolved in the context of a Palestinian state, but certainly not in the borders of Israel.

The Arab attack in 1948 on Israel resulted in two refugee problems: Palestinian refugee problem; and Jewish refugees, roughly the same number, who were expelled from Arab lands. Now, tiny Israel absorbed the Jewish refugees, but the vast Arab world refused to absorb the Palestinian refugees. Now, 63 years later, the Palestinians come to us, and they say to Israel, accept the children—grandchildren, really, and the great-grandchildren of these refugees, thereby wiping out Israel's future as a Jewish state.

So it's not going to happen. Everybody knows it's not going to happen. And I think it's time to tell the Palestinians forthrightly it's not going to happen. The Palestinian refugee problem has to be resolved. It can be resolved, and it will be resolved if the Palestinians choose to do so in a Palestinian state. So that's a real possibility. But it's not going to be resolved within the Jewish state.

The President and I discussed all these issues, and I think we may have differences here and there, but I think there's an overall direction that we wish to work together to pursue a real, genuine peace between Israel and its Palestinian neighbors, a peace that is defensible.

Mr. President, you're the leader of a great people, the American people. And I'm the leader of a much smaller people, the——

President Obama. A great people.

Prime Minister Netanyahu. It's a great people too. It's the ancient nation of Israel. And you know, we've been around for almost 4,000 years. We've experienced struggle and suffering like no other people. We've gone through expulsions and pogroms and massacres and the murder of millions. But I can say that even at the dearth of—even at the nadir of the valley of death, we never lost hope and we never lost our dream of reestablishing a sovereign state in our ancient homeland, the land of Israel.

And now it falls on my shoulders as the Prime Minister of Israel, at a time of extraordinary instability and uncertainty in the Middle East, to work with you to fashion a peace that will ensure Israel's security and will not jeopardize its survival. I take this responsibility with pride, but with great humility, because, as I told you in our conversation, we don't have a lot of margin for error. And because, Mr. President, history will not give the Jewish people another chance.

So in the coming days and weeks and months, I intend to work with you to seek a peace that will address our security concerns, seek a genuine recognition that we wish from our Palestinian neighbors to give a better future for Israel and for the entire region.

And I thank you for the opportunity to exchange our views and to work together for this common end. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Obama. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:35 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria. Prime Minister Netanyahu referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1; and President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at the Central Intelligence Agency in Langley, Virginia
May 20, 2011

Well, thank you, Leon, and thank you, Jim. When I chose Leon Panetta as Director of the CIA, I said he was going to be a strong advocate for this Agency and would strengthen your capabilities to meet the threats of our time. And when I chose Jim Clapper as Director of National Intelligence, I charged him with making sure that our intelligence community works as one integrated team. That's exactly what these two leaders have done, along with all of you.

So, Jim and Leon, thank you for your remarkable leadership, not just in recent weeks, but during the entirety of your tenure. You have done a great job.

This is my third visit here to Langley as President, and each of these visits has marked another milestone in our mission to protect the American people and keep our country safe.

On my first visit, just months after taking office, I stood here and I said that this Agency and our entire intelligence community is fundamental to America's national security. I said that I believed that your best days were still to come, and I pledged that you would have my full support to carry out your critical work.

Soon after that visit, I called Leon into the Oval Office, and I directed him to make the killing or capture of Usama bin Laden the top priority in our war to defeat Al Qaida. And he came back here, and you guys, who had already been working so hard on this issue, redoubled your efforts. And that was true all across the intelligence community.

My second visit, a year later, came under more somber circumstances. We gathered to pay tribute to seven American patriots who gave their lives in this fight at a remote post in Afghanistan. As has already been mentioned, their stars now grace this Memorial Wall. And through our grief and our tears, we resolved that their sacrifice would be our summons to carry on their work, to complete this mission, to win this war.

Today I've returned just to say thank you on behalf of all Americans and people around the world because you carried on. You stayed focused on your mission. You honored the memory of your fallen colleagues. And in helping to locate and take down Usama bin Laden, you made it possible for us to achieve the most significant victory yet in our war to defeat Al Qaida.

I just met with some of the outstanding leaders and teams from across the community who worked so long and so hard to make that raid a success. And I'm pleased today that we're joined by representatives from all of our intelligence agencies and that folks are watching this live back at all of those agencies, because this truly was a team effort. That's not always the case in Washington. [*Laughter*] But all of you work together every single day.

This is one of the few times when all these leaders and organizations have the occasion to appear together publicly. And so I thank all of you for coming, because I think it's so important for the American people to see all of you here today.

Part of the challenge of intelligence work is, by necessity, your work has to remain secret. I know that carries a heavy burden. You're often the first ones to get the blame when things go wrong, and you're always the last ones to get the credit when things go right. So when things do go right, and they do more often than the world will ever know, we ought to celebrate your success.

That's why I came here. I wanted every single one of you to know, whether you work at the CIA or across the community, at every step of our effort to take out bin Laden, the work you did and the quality of the intelligence that you provided made the critical difference: to me, to our team on those helicopters, to our Nation.

After I directed that getting bin Laden be your—the priority, you hunkered down even more, building on years of painstaking work, pulling together, in some cases, the slenderest of intelligence streams, running those threads to ground until you found that courier and you

tracked him to that compound. And when I was briefed last summer, you had built the strongest intelligence case against—in terms of where bin Laden was since Tora Bora.

In the months that followed, including all those meetings in the Situation Room, we did what sound intelligence demands: We pushed for more collection, we pushed for more evidence, we questioned our assumptions. You strengthened your analysis. You didn't bite your tongue and try to spin the ball, but you gave it to me straight each and every time.

And we did something really remarkable in Washington: We kept it a secret. [*Laughter*] That's how it should be.

Of course, when the time came to actually make the decision, we didn't know for sure that bin Laden was there. The evidence was circumstantial, and the risks, especially to the lives of our special operations forces, were huge. And I knew that the consequences of failure could be enormous. But I made the decision that I did because I had absolute confidence in the skill of our military personnel and I had confidence in you. I put my bet on you. And now the whole world knows that that faith in you was justified.

So just as impressive as what you did was how you did it. It was a tribute to your perseverance, your relentless focus and determination over many years. For the fight against Al Qaida did not begin on 9/11. Among you are veterans who've been pursuing these murderers for many years, even before they attacked our Embassies in Africa and struck the *Cole* in Yemen. Among you are young men and women for whom 9/11 was a call to service. This fight has defined your generation. And on this wall are stars honoring all your colleagues and friends, more than a dozen who have given their lives in the fight against Al Qaida and its violent allies.

As the years wore on, others began to think that this terrorist might never be brought to justice. But you never quit. You never gave up. You pulled together across this Agency and across the community.

No one piece of information and no one agency made this possible. You did it together: CIA, National Security Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, everyone at ODNI and the National Counterterrorism Center, folks across the Government, civilian and military, so many of you here today.

And that's exactly how our intelligence community is supposed to work, using every capability—human, technical—collecting, analyzing, sharing, integrating intelligence, and then acting on it.

That's what made this one of the greatest intelligence successes in American history, and that's why intelligence professionals are going to study and be inspired by your achievement for generations to come.

But make no mistake: This is not over. Because we not only took out the symbol and operational leader of Al Qaida, we walked off with his files—[*laughter*]—the largest treasure trove of intelligence ever seized from a terrorist leader—many of you now are working around the clock. You didn't have much time to celebrate. We've got to analyze and evaluate and exploit this mountain of intelligence.

So today, every terrorist in the Al Qaida network should be watching their back, because we're going to review every video, we are going to examine every photo, we're going to read every one of those millions of pages, we're going to pursue every lead. We are going to go wherever it takes us. We're going to finish the job. We are going to defeat Al Qaida.

Even as we stay focused on this mission, we need you to stay nimble and flexible to meet the full range of threats to our security, from plots against our homeland to nations seeking weapons of mass destruction to transnational threats such as cybercriminals and narcotraffickers.

So I'm going to keep relying on you for your intelligence, the analysis that comes across my desk every single day. And 300-plus [million]* Americans are counting on you to stay a step

* White House correction.

ahead of our adversaries and to keep our country safe.

I have never been more proud or more confident in you than I am today, not just because this extraordinary success, but because it reminds us of who we are as a people and as a nation. You reminded us that when we Americans set our mind to something, when we are focused and when we are working together, when we're not worried about who's getting the credit and when we stay true to our values, even if it takes years, there is nothing we cannot do.

That's why I still believe in what I said my first visit here 2 years ago: Your greatest days are still to come. And if any of you doubt what this means, I wish I could have taken some of you on the trip I made to New York City, where we laid a wreath at Ground Zero, and I had a chance to meet firefighters who had lost an entire shift; police officers who had lost their comrades; a young woman, 14 years old, who had written to me because her last memory of her father was talking to him on the phone while her mother wept beside her, right before they watched the tower go down.

And she and other members of families of 9/11 victims talked about what this meant. And it meant that their suffering had not been forgotten and that the American community stands with them, that we stand with each other.

So most of you will never get headlines for the work that you do. You won't get ticker-tape parades. But as you go about your work with incredible diligence and dedication every single day, I hope all of you understand how important it is, how grateful I am, and that you have the thanks of a grateful nation.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. at CIA Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1; and Payton Wall, whose father Glen Wall was killed in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and her mother Diane. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper, Jr., and Director of Central Intelligence Leon E. Panetta, who introduced the President.

The President's Weekly Address
May 21, 2011

This week, I went to Memphis, Tennessee, where I spoke to the graduating class of Booker T. Washington High School. Graduations are always happy occasions, but this commencement was especially hopeful because of just how much the kids at Booker T. Washington High School had overcome.

This is a school in the middle of a tough neighborhood in South Memphis. There's a lot of crime; there's a lot of poverty. And just a few years ago, only about half of the students at the school graduated. Just a handful went off to college each year.

But folks came together to change all that. Under the leadership of a dynamic principal and devoted teachers, they started special academies for ninth graders, because they found that that's when a lot of kids were lost. They made it possible for students to take AP classes or vocational courses. Most importantly, they didn't just change the curriculum; they created a culture that prizes hard work and discipline and that shows every student that they matter.

Today, four out of five students at the school earn a diploma. Seventy percent continue their education, many the first in their families to go to college. So Booker T. Washington High School is no longer a story about what's gone wrong in education. It's a story about how we can set it right.

We need to encourage this kind of change all across America. We need to reward the reforms that are driven not by Washington, but

by principals and teachers and parents. That's how we'll make progress in education, not from the top down, but from the bottom up. And that's the guiding principle of the Race to the Top competition my administration started 2 years ago.

The idea is simple: If States show that they're serious about reform, we'll show them the money. And it's already making a difference throughout the country. In Tennessee, where I met those students, they've launched an innovative residency program so that new teachers can be mentored by veteran educators. In Oregon, Michigan, and elsewhere, grants are supporting the work of teachers who are lengthening the school day, offering more specialized classes, and making the changes necessary to improve struggling schools.

Our challenge now is to allow all 50 States to benefit from the success of Race to the Top. We need to promote reform that gets results, while encouraging communities to figure out what's best for their kids. That's why it's so important that Congress replace No Child Left Behind this year, so schools have that flexibility. Reform just can't wait.

And if anyone doubts this, they ought to head to Booker T. Washington High. They ought to meet the inspiring young people who overcame so much and worked so hard to earn their diplomas in a school that believed in their promise and gave them the opportunity to succeed. We need to give every child in America that chance. That's why education reform matters.

Thanks for listening, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:15 p.m. on May 20 in the Library at the White House for broadcast on May 21. In the address, the President referred to Alisha Kiner, principal, Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis, TN. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 20, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on May 21.

Remarks at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee Policy Conference
May 22, 2011

The President. Good morning. Thank you very much. Please have a seat. Thank you. What a remarkable, remarkable crowd. Thank you, Rosy, for your very kind introduction. I did not know you play basketball. [*Laughter*] I will take your word for it. [*Laughter*] Rosy, thank you for your many years of friendship. Back in Chicago, when I was just getting started in national politics, I reached out to a lot of people for advice and counsel, and Rosy was one of the very first. When I made my first visit to Israel, after entering the Senate, Rosy, you were at my side every step of that profound journey through the Holy Land. So I want to thank you for your enduring friendship, your leadership, and for your warm introduction today.

I also want to thank David Victor, Howard Kohr, and all the board of directors. And let me say that it is wonderful to look out and see so many great friends, including a very large delegation from Chicago: Alan Solow, Howard Green. Thank you all.

I want to thank the Members of Congress who are joining you today, who do so much to sustain the bonds between the United States and Israel, including Eric Cantor, Steny Hoyer, and the tireless leader I was proud to appoint as the new chair of the DNC, Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

We're joined by Israel's representative to the United States, Ambassador Michael Oren. And we're joined by one of my top advisers on Israel and the Middle East for the past 4 years and who I know is going to be an outstanding Ambassador to Israel, Dan Shapiro. Dan has always been a close and trusted adviser and friend, and I know that he will do a terrific job.

And at a time when so many young people around the world are standing up and making their voices heard, I also want to acknowledge all the college students from across the country who are here today. No one has a greater stake in the outcome of events that are unfolding today than your generation, and it's inspiring to

see you devote your time and energy to help shape that future.

Now, I'm not here to subject you to a long policy speech. I gave one on Thursday in which I said that the United States sees the historic changes sweeping the Middle East and North Africa as a moment of great challenge, but also a moment of opportunity for greater peace and security for the entire region, including the State of Israel.

On Friday, I was joined at the White House by Prime Minister Netanyahu, and we reaffirmed that fundamental truth that has guided our Presidents and Prime Ministers for more than 60 years: that even while we may at times disagree, as friends sometimes will, the bonds between the United States and Israel are unbreakable, and the commitment of the United States to the security of Israel is ironclad.

A strong and secure Israel is in the national security interest of the United States not simply because we share strategic interests, although we do both seek a region where families and children can live free from the threat of violence. It's not simply because we face common dangers, although there can be no denying that terrorism and the spread of nuclear weapons are grave threats to both our nations.

America's commitment to Israel's security flows from a deeper place, and that's the values we share. As two people who struggled to win our freedom against overwhelming odds, we understand that preserving the security for which our forefathers and foremothers fought must be the work of every generation. As two vibrant democracies, we recognize that the liberties and freedoms we cherish must be constantly nurtured. And as the Nation that recognized the State of Israel moments after its independence, we have a profound commitment to its survival as a strong, secure homeland for the Jewish people.

We also know how difficult that search for security can be, especially for a small nation like Israel living in a very tough neighborhood. I've seen it firsthand. When I touched my hand against the Western Wall and placed my prayer between its ancient stones, I thought of all the centuries that the children of Israel had longed to return to their ancient homeland. When I went to Sderot and saw the daily struggle to survive in the eyes of an 8-year-old boy who lost his leg to a Hamas rocket and when I walked among the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem, I was reminded of the existential fear of Israelis when a modern dictator seeks nuclear weapons and threatens to wipe Israel off the face of the map—face of the Earth.

Because we understand the challenges Israel faces, I and my administration have made the security of Israel a priority. It's why we've increased cooperation between our militaries to unprecedented levels. It's why we're making our most advanced technologies available to our Israeli allies. It's why, despite tough fiscal times, we've increased foreign military financing to record levels. And that includes additional support, beyond regular military aid, for the Iron Dome antirocket system, a powerful example of American-Israeli cooperation, which has already intercepted rockets from Gaza and helped saved Israeli lives. So make no mistake: We will maintain Israel's qualitative military edge.

You also see our commitment to our shared security in our determination to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Here in the United States, we've imposed the toughest sanctions ever on the Iranian regime. And at the United Nations, under our leadership, we've secured the most comprehensive international sanctions on the regime, which have been joined by allies and partners around the world. Today, Iran is virtually cut off from large parts of the international financial system, and we're going to keep up the pressure. So let me be absolutely clear: We remain committed to preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Its illicit nuclear program is just one challenge that Iran poses. As I said on Thursday, the Iranian Government has shown its hypocrisy by claiming to support the rights of protesters while treating its own people with brutality. Moreover, Iran continues to support terrorism across the region, including providing weapons and funds to terrorist organizations. So we will continue to work to prevent these actions, and

we will stand up to groups like Hizballah, who exercise political assassination and seek to impose their will through rockets and car bombs.

You also see our commitment to Israel's security in our steadfast opposition to any attempt to delegitimize the State of Israel. As I said at the United Nations last year, "Israel's existence must not be a subject for debate," and "efforts to chip away at Israel's legitimacy will only be met by the unshakeable opposition of the United States."

So when the Durban Review Conference advanced anti-Israel sentiment, we withdrew. In the wake of the Goldstone report, we stood up strongly for Israel's right to defend itself. When an effort was made to insert the United Nations into matters that should be resolved through direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, we vetoed it.

And so in both word and deed, we have been unwavering in our support of Israel's security. And it is precisely because of our commitment to Israel's long-term security that we have worked to advance peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Now, I have said repeatedly that core issues can only be negotiated in direct talks between the parties. And I indicated on Thursday that the recent agreement between Fatah and Hamas poses an enormous obstacle to peace. No country can be expected to negotiate with a terrorist organization sworn to its destruction. And we will continue to demand that Hamas accept the basic responsibilities of peace, including recognizing Israel's right to exist and rejecting violence and adhering to all existing agreements. And we once again call on Hamas to release Gilad Shalit, who has been kept from his family for 5 long years.

And yet no matter how hard it may be to start meaningful negotiations under current circumstances, we must acknowledge that a failure to try is not an option. The status quo is unsustainable. And that is why on Thursday, I stated publicly the principles that the United States believes can provide a foundation for negotiations toward an agreement to end the conflict and all claims, the broad outlines of which have been known for many years and have been the template for discussions between the United States, Israel, and the Palestinians since at least the Clinton administration.

I know that stating these principles—on the issues of territory and security—generated some controversy over the past few days. [*Laughter*] I wasn't surprised. I know very well that the easy thing to do, particularly for a President preparing for reelection, is to avoid any controversy. I don't need Rahm to tell me that. Don't need Axelrod to tell me that. But I said to Prime Minister Netanyahu, I believe that the current situation in the Middle East does not allow for procrastination. I also believe that real friends talk openly and honestly with one another. So I want to share with you some of what I said to the Prime Minister.

Here are the facts we all must confront. First, the number of Palestinians living west of the Jordan River is growing rapidly and fundamentally reshaping the demographic realities of both Israel and the Palestinian Territories. This will make it harder and harder, without a peace deal, to maintain Israel as both a Jewish state and a democratic state.

Second, technology will make it harder for Israel to defend itself in the absence of a genuine peace.

Third, a new generation of Arabs is reshaping the region. A just and lasting peace can no longer be forged with one or two Arab leaders. Going forward, millions of Arab citizens have to see that peace is possible for that peace to be sustained.

And just as the context has changed in the Middle East, so too has it been changing in the international community over the last several years. There's a reason why the Palestinians are pursuing their interests at the United Nations. They recognize that there is an impatience with the peace process, or the absence of one, not just in the Arab World—in Latin America, in Asia, and in Europe. And that impatience is growing, and it's already manifesting itself in capitals around the world.

And those are the facts. I firmly believe, and I repeated on Thursday, that peace cannot be imposed on the parties to the conflict. No vote at the United Nations will ever create an inde-

pendent Palestinian state. And the United States will stand up against efforts to single Israel out at the United Nations or in any international forum. Israel's legitimacy is not a matter for debate. That is my commitment; that is my pledge to all of you.

Moreover, we know that peace demands a partner, which is why I said that Israel cannot be expected to negotiate with Palestinians who do not recognize its right to exist. And we will hold the Palestinians accountable for their actions and for their rhetoric.

But the march to isolate Israel internationally and the impulse of the Palestinians to abandon negotiations will continue to gain momentum in the absence of a credible peace process and alternative. And for us to have leverage with the Palestinians, to have leverage with the Arab States, and with the international community, the basis for negotiations has to hold out the prospect of success. And so in advance of a 5-day trip to Europe in which the Middle East will be a topic of acute interest, I chose to speak about what peace will require.

There was nothing particularly original in my proposal. This basic framework for negotiations has long been the basis for discussions among the parties, including previous U.S. administrations. Since questions have been raised, let me repeat what I actually said on Thursday, not what I was reported to have said.

I said that the United States believes that negotiations should result in two states, with permanent Palestinian borders with Israel, Jordan, and Egypt and permanent Israeli borders with Palestine. The borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states. The Palestinian people must have the right to govern themselves and reach their potential in a sovereign and contiguous state.

As for security, every state has the right to self-defense, and Israel must be able to defend itself, by itself, against any threat. Provisions must also be robust enough to prevent a resurgence of terrorism, to stop the infiltration of weapons, and to provide effective border security. And a full and phased withdrawal of Israeli military forces should be coordinated with the assumption of Palestinian security responsibility in a sovereign and nonmilitarized state. And the duration of this transition period must be agreed, and the effectiveness of security arrangements must be demonstrated.

Now, that is what I said. And it was my reference to the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps that received the lion's share of the attention——

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. ——including just now. And since my position has been misrepresented several times, let me reaffirm what "1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps" means.

By definition, it means that the parties themselves—Israelis and Palestinians—will negotiate a border that is different than the one that existed on June 4, 1967. That's what mutually agreed-upon swaps means. It is a well-known formula to all who have worked on this issue for a generation. It allows the parties themselves to account for the changes that have taken place over the last 44 years. It allows the parties themselves to take account of those changes, including the new demographic realities on the ground, and the needs of both sides. The ultimate goal is two states for two people: Israel as a Jewish state and the homeland for the Jewish people and the state of Palestine as the homeland for the Palestinian people, each state enjoying self-determination, mutual recognition, and peace.

If there is a controversy, then, it's not based in substance. What I did on Thursday was to say publicly what has long been acknowledged privately. I've done so because we can't afford to wait another decade or another two decades or another three decades to achieve peace. The world is moving too fast. [*Applause*] The world is moving too fast. The extraordinary challenges facing Israel will only grow. Delay will undermine Israel's security and the peace that the Israeli people deserve.

Now, I know that some of you will disagree with this assessment. I respect that. And as fellow Americans and friends of Israel, I know we can have this discussion.

Ultimately, it is the right and the responsibility of the Israeli Government to make the hard choices that are necessary to protect a Jewish and democratic state for which so many generations have sacrificed. And as a friend of Israel, I'm committed to doing our part to see that this goal is realized. And I will call not just on Israel, but on the Palestinians, on the Arab States, and the international community to join us in this effort, because the burden of making hard choices must not be Israel's alone.

But even as we do all that's necessary to ensure Israel's security, even as we are clear eyed about the difficult challenges before us, and even as we pledge to stand by Israel through whatever tough days lie ahead, I hope we do not give up on that vision of peace. For if history teaches us anything, if the story of Israel teaches us anything, it is that with courage and resolve, progress is possible. Peace is possible.

The Talmud teaches us that "so long as a person still has life, they should never abandon faith." And that lesson seems especially fitting today.

For so long as there are those across the Middle East and beyond who are standing up for the legitimate rights and freedoms which have been denied by their governments, the United States will never abandon our support for those rights that are universal.

And so long as there are those who long for a better future, we will never abandon our pursuit of a just and lasting peace that ends this conflict with two states living side by side in peace and security. This is not idealism; it is not naivete. It is a hardheaded recognition that a genuine peace is the only path that will ultimately provide for a peaceful Palestine as the homeland of the Palestinian people and a Jewish State of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people. That is my goal, and I look forward to continuing to work with AIPAC to achieve that goal.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless Israel, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:56 a.m. at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Lee "Rosy" Rosenberg, president, David Victor, former president, Howard Kohr, executive director, and Howard Green, national board member, American Israel Public Affairs Committee; Alan P. Solow, chairman, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; U.S. Ambassador-designate to Israel Daniel B. Shapiro; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; Osher Twito of Sderot, Israel, who was wounded in a rocket attack on February 9, 2008; Richard J. Goldstone, head, United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict; Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier held captive by militants in Gaza since June 25, 2006; Mayor Rahm I. Emanuel of Chicago, IL, in his former capacity as White House Chief of Staff; and former White House Senior Adviser David M. Axelrod.

Statement on Tornado and Severe Storm Destruction in Missouri and the Midwest

May 22, 2011

Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the families of all those who lost their lives in the tornadoes and severe weather that struck Joplin, Missouri, as well as communities across the Midwest today. We commend the heroic efforts by those who have responded and who are working to help their friends and neighbors at this very difficult time. At my direction, FEMA is working with the affected areas' State and local officials to support response and recovery efforts, and the Federal Government stands ready to help our fellow Americans as needed.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 23.

Remarks Following a Meeting with Prime Minister Enda Kenny of Ireland in Dublin, Ireland

May 23, 2011

Prime Minister Kenny. If everybody can hear. Obviously, this is the first occasion in world history, I think, there is two bilaterals with an American President in the space of 67 minutes. But I want to welcome President Obama and the First Lady Michelle to Dublin on their way through to a state visit in England and further activities.

I can say that the Irish people have been waiting for this visit. Their excitement is palpable. And I trust that the President and his wife and party will enjoy their visit to Moneygall, home of his triple-great-grandfather Falmouth Kearney, when he goes down there today.

I'd like to say, on this occasion here we've discussed a range of issues. I've explained to the President the seriousness with which Ireland and its new Government, led by myself and the presence here of the *Oireachtas*, are dealing with the issues that affect our country: the banks, the unemployment situation, and our seriousness of intent in dealing with our budget deficit. Also, in conjunction with the conditions of the IMF–EU bailout, dealing with what we're doing there, and expressed appreciation for the general support of America in forums in that regard.

We have discussed the question of the Northern Ireland Assembly, the new assembly, our relationship with that assembly in relation to the British Government. We have discussed the implications and the consequences of the Queen's visit here, following on the President's invitation, and the enormous impact that that made together with the visit of the British Prime Minister during the course of that state visit.

We discussed the question of the President's speech in immigration, which he made in El Paso, and the fact that the administration are continuing to work on that.

We discussed the relationship between Ireland and the States, the continuing importance of that. And I reiterated the no-change policy in respect of the use of Shannon in respect of American aircraft serving the U.N. resolutions passing through.

And we discussed a range of other issues relative to the country here and the fact that courage is necessary for leaders who take risks in the interests of solving the problems of their people and their countries.

I reiterated our appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the American President for his visit here. And like all politicians, we have some unfinished business, and that is that the next time he comes back, he's going to bring his golf clubs. [*Laughter*]

Thank you. Mr. President.

President Obama. Thank you so much.

Well, first of all, let me just say how extraordinarily grateful I am to Taoiseach, to the President of Ireland for their extraordinary hospitality to myself and Michelle. It is heartwarming to be here. And people even arranged for the sun to come out shortly after I arrived.

The friendship and the bond between the United States and Ireland could not be stronger. Obviously, it is not just a matter of strategic interest, it's not just a matter of foreign policy. For the United States, Ireland carries a blood link with us. And for the millions of Irish Americans, this continues to symbolize the homeland and the extraordinary traditions of an extraordinary people.

The Taoiseach and I have already had occasion to meet in Washington. It's wonderful to be able to discuss with him again some of the important issues that he is working on. We're glad to see that progress is being made in stabilizing the economic situation here. I know it's a hard road, but it's one that the Irish people are more than up to the task in achieving.

What I emphasized is that we want to continue to strengthen the bonds of trade and commerce between our two countries and that we are rooting for Ireland's success and we'll do everything that we can to be helpful on the path to recovery.

We also wanted to express our extraordinary appreciation to Ireland for all the work that it does internationally. I mentioned that Ireland punches above its weight. It's a small country, but the work it does on a range of issues—in peacekeeping, to the trainers in Afghanistan, to this work we're doing together on food security, to its strong voice on human rights—all that makes an enormous difference around the world. And the extraordinary relationship that we have with Ireland is also reflected in the work that it does in the EU, and so we're grateful for that.

Finally, I wanted to just express to the Irish people, and I'll have occasion to make some lengthier remarks later, how inspired we have been by the progress that's been made in Northern Ireland, because it speaks to the possibilities of peace and people in longstanding struggles being able to reimagine their relationships. To see Her Majesty the Queen of England come here and to see the mutual warmth and healing that, I think, took place as a consequence of that visit, to know that the former Taoiseach FitzGerald was able to witness the Queen coming here, that sends a signal not just in England, not just here in Ireland, but around the world. It sends what Bobby Kennedy once called "a ripple of hope" that may manifest itself in a whole range of ways.

And so to all those who have been working tirelessly to bring about peace in Northern Ireland, to those who've been willing to take those risks, we are grateful to them. To your administration, which I know is carrying on that legacy and continues to invest in it, we appreciate it.

We are proud of the part that America played in helping to get both sides to talk and to provide a space for that conversation to take place, and we want you to know that we will continue to be there as that moves forward. And we're confident that it, in fact, will.

So I am extraordinarily grateful to be here. To the Irish people, thank you for the wonderful welcome you're providing my wife and myself.

Q. When you come back to Washington, Mr. President, will you——

Prime Minister Kenny. Professor Padraic Whyte in Trinity College, he's the professor of children's literature, approached me some time ago. In 1922, Padraic Colum was commissioned by the Hawaiian legislature to track down myths and legends of Hawaii and write them as children's stories. He produced three volumes of children's stories, which I have presented and have the honor of a first edition, not to the President, not to the First Lady, but to his children Malia and Sasha, stories of their daddy's birthplace. And I hope they enjoy it.

President Obama. Well, this is an extraordinary gift, and it just confirms that if you need somebody to do some good writing, you hire an Irishman. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at Farmleigh House. In his remarks, he referred to President Mary P. McAleese of Ireland; Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom; and former Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald of Ireland, who died on May 19. Prime Minister Kenny referred to Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Remarks at Trinity College Dublin in Dublin
May 23, 2011

The President. Thank you! Hello, Dublin! Hello, Ireland! My name is Barack Obama—[*applause*]—of the Moneygall Obamas. And I've come home to find the apostrophe that we lost somewhere along the way. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. I've got it here!

The President. Now—is that where it is? [*Laughter*]

Some wise Irish man or woman once said that broken Irish is better than clever English.

So here goes: *Ta athas orm a bheith in Eirinn*—I am happy to be in Ireland! I'm happy to be with so many *a chairde*.

I want to thank my extraordinary hosts—first of all, Taoiseach Kenny, his lovely wife Fionnuala, President McAleese, and her husband Martin—for welcoming me earlier today. Thank you, Lord Mayor Gerry Breen and the *Garda* for allowing me to crash this celebration.

Let me also express my condolences on the recent passing of former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald, someone who believed in the power of education, someone who believed in the potential of youth, most of all, someone who believed in the potential of peace and who lived to see that peace realized.

And most of all, thank you to the citizens of Dublin and the people of Ireland for the warm and generous hospitality that you've shown me and Michelle. It certainly feels like 100,000 welcomes. We feel very much at home. I feel even more at home after that pint that I had. [*Laughter*] Feel even warmer. [*Laughter*]

In return, let me offer the hearty greetings of tens of millions of Irish Americans who proudly trace their heritage to this small island. They say hello.

Now, I knew that I had some roots across the Atlantic, but until recently, I could not unequivocally claim that I was one of those Irish Americans. But now, if you believe the Corrigan Brothers, there's no one more Irish than me. [*Laughter*]

So I want to thank the genealogists who traced my family tree.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]—right here!

The President. Right here? Thank you. It turns out that people take a lot of interest in you when you're running for President. [*Laughter*] They look into your past. They check out your place of birth. [*Laughter*] Things like that. [*Laughter*] Now, I do wish somebody had provided me all this evidence earlier because it would have come in handy back when I was first running in my hometown of Chicago. Because Chicago is the Irish capital of the Midwest, a city where it was once said you could stand on 79th Street and hear the brogue of every county in Ireland.

So naturally, a politician like me craved a slot in the St. Patrick's Day parade. The problem was not many people knew me or could even pronounce my name. I told them it was a Gaelic name. They didn't believe me. [*Laughter*]

So one year, a few volunteers and I did make it into the parade, but we were literally the last marchers. After 2 hours, finally it was our turn. And while we rode the route and we smiled and we waved, the city workers were right behind us cleaning up the garbage. [*Laughter*] It was a little depressing. But I'll bet those parade organizers are watching TV today and feeling kind of bad, because this is a pretty good parade right here.

Audience member. Go Bulls!

President Obama. Go Bulls! I like that. [*Laughter*] We got some Bulls fans here.

Now, of course, an American doesn't really require Irish blood to understand that ours is a proud, enduring, centuries-old relationship, that we are bound by history and friendship and shared values. And that's why I've come here today, as an American President, to reaffirm those bonds of affection.

Earlier today Michelle and I visited Moneygall, where we saw my ancestral home and dropped by the local pub. And we received a very warm welcome from all the people there, including my long-lost eighth cousin Henry. [*Laughter*] Henry now is affectionately known as Henry VIII. [*Laughter*] And it was remarkable to see the small town where a young shoemaker named Falmouth Kearney, my great-great-great-grandfather, my grandfather's grandfather, lived his early life. And I was shown the records from the parish recording his birth. And we saw the home where he lived.

And he left during the Great Hunger, as so many Irish did, to seek a new life in the New World. He traveled by ship to New York, where he entered himself into the records as a laborer. He married an American girl from Ohio. They settled in the Midwest. They started a family.

It's a familiar story because it's one lived and cherished by Americans of all backgrounds. It's integral to our national identity. It's who we

are: a nation of immigrants from all around the world.

But standing there in Moneygall, I couldn't help but think how heartbreaking it must have been for that great-great-great-grandfather of mine and so many others to part, to watch Donegal coasts and Dingle cliffs recede, to leave behind all they knew in hopes that something better lay over the horizon.

When people like Falmouth boarded those ships, they often did so with no family, no friends, no money, nothing to sustain their journey but faith: faith in the Almighty, faith in the idea of America, faith that it was a place where you could be prosperous, you could be free, you could think and talk and worship as you pleased, a place where you could make it if you tried.

And as they worked and struggled and sacrificed and sometimes experienced great discrimination to build that better life for the next generation, they passed on that faith to their children and to their children's children, an inheritance that their great-great-great-grandchildren like me still carry with them. We call it the America Dream.

It's the dream that Falmouth Kearney was attracted to when he went to America. It's the dream that drew my own father to America from a small village in Africa. It's a dream that we've carried forward, sometimes through stormy waters, sometimes at great cost, for more than two centuries. And for my own sake, I'm grateful they made those journeys because if they hadn't, you'd be listening to somebody else speak right now. [*Laughter*]

And for America's sake, we're grateful so many others from this land took that chance as well. After all, never has a nation so small inspired so much in another.

Irish signatures are on our founding documents. Irish blood was spilled on our battlefields. Irish sweat built our great cities. Our spirit is eternally refreshed by Irish story and Irish song, our public life by the humor and heart and dedication of servants with names like Kennedy and Reagan, O'Neill and Moynihan. So you could say there's always been a little green behind the red, white, and blue.

When the father of our country, George Washington, needed an army, it was the fierce fighting of your sons that caused the British official to lament, "We have lost America through the Irish." And as George Washington said himself: "When our friendless standards were first unfurled, who were the strangers who first mustered around our staff? And when it reeled in the light, who more brilliantly sustained it than Erin's generous sons?"

When we strove to blot out the stain of slavery and advance the rights of man, we found common cause with your struggles against oppression. Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave and our great abolitionist, forged an unlikely friendship right here in Dublin with your great liberator, Daniel O'Connell. His time here, Frederick Douglass said, defined him not as a color, but as a man. And it strengthened the nonviolent campaign he would return home to wage.

Recently, some of their descendents met here in Dublin to commemorate and continue that friendship between Douglass and O'Connell.

When Abraham Lincoln struggled to preserve our young Union, more than 100,000 Irish and Irish Americans joined the cause, with units like the Irish Brigade charging into battle, green flags with gold harp waving alongside our Star-Spangled Banner.

When depression gripped America, Ireland sent tens of thousands of packages of shamrocks to cheer up its countrymen, saying, "May the message of Erin's shamrocks bring joy to those away."

And when an Iron Curtain fell across this continent and our way of life was challenged, it was our first Irish President—our first Catholic President—John F. Kennedy, who made us believe 50 years ago this week that mankind could do something big and bold and ambitious as walk on the Moon. He made us dream again.

That is the story of America and Ireland. That's the tale of our brawn and our blood, side by side, in making and remaking a nation, pulling it westward, pulling it skyward, moving it forward again and again and again. And that is our task again today.

I think we all realize that both of our nations have faced great trials in recent years, including recessions so severe that many of our people are still trying to fight their way out. And naturally, our concern turns to our families, our friends, and our neighbors. And some in this enormous audience are thinking about their own prospects and their own futures. Those of us who are parents wonder what it will mean for our children and young people like so many who are here today. Will you see the same progress we've seen since we were your age? Will you inherit futures as big and as bright as the ones that we inherited? Will you—will your dreams remain alive in our time?

This nation has faced those questions before: when your land couldn't feed those who tilled it, when the boats leaving these shores held some of your brightest minds, when brother fought against brother. Yours is a history frequently marked by the greatest of trials and the deepest of sorrow. But yours is also a history of proud and defiant endurance; of a nation that kept alive the flame of knowledge in dark ages, that overcame occupation and outlived fallow fields, that triumphed over its troubles; of a resilient people who built—beat all the odds.

And, Ireland, as trying as these times are, I know our future is still as big and as bright as our children expect it to be. I know that because I know it is precisely in times like these—in times of great challenge, in times of great change—when we remember who we truly are. We're peoples, the Irish and Americans, who never stop imagining a brighter future, even in bitter times. We're people who make that future happen through hard work and through sacrifice, through investing in those things that matter most, like family and community.

We remember, in the words made famous by one of your greatest poets, that "in dreams begin responsibility."

This is a nation that met that responsibility by choosing, like your ancestors did, to keep alight the flame of knowledge and invest in a world-class education for your young people. And today, Ireland's youth and those who've come back to build a new Ireland are now among the best educated, most entrepreneurial in the world. And I see those young people here today, and I know that Ireland will succeed.

This is a nation that met its responsibilities by choosing to apply the lessons of your own past to assume a heavier burden of responsibility on the world stage. And today, a people who once knew the pain of an empty stomach now feed those who hunger abroad. Ireland is working hand in hand with the United States to make sure that hungry mouths are fed around the world, because we remember those times. We know what crippling poverty can be like, and we want to make sure that we're helping others.

You're a people who modernized and can now stand up for those who can't yet stand up for themselves. And this is a nation that met its responsibilities and inspired the entire world by choosing to see past the scars of violence and mistrust to forge a lasting peace on this island.

When President Clinton said at this very spot 15 years ago, "Waging peace is risky," I think those who were involved understood the risks they were taking. But you, the Irish people, persevered. And you cast your votes and you made your voices heard for that peace. And you responded heroically when it was challenged. And you did it, as President McAleese has written, "For all the apparent intractability of our problems, the irrepressible human impulse to love kept nagging and nudging us towards reconciliation."

Whenever peace is challenged, you will have to sustain that irrepressible impulse. And America will stand by you—always. America will stand by you always in your pursuit of peace.

And, Ireland, you need to understand that you've already so surpassed the world's highest hopes that what was notable about the Northern Ireland elections 2 weeks ago was that they came and went without much attention. It's not because the world has forgotten. It's because this once unlikely dream has become that most extraordinary of things: It has become real. A

dream has turned to reality because of the work of this nation.

In dreams begin responsibility. And embracing that responsibility, working toward it, overcoming the cynics and the naysayers and those who say, "You can't," that's what makes dreams real. That's what Falmouth Kearney did when he got on that boat, and that's what so many generations of Irish men and women have done here in this spectacular country. That is something we can point to and show our children, Irish and American alike. That is something we can teach them as they grow up together in a new century, side by side, as it has been since our beginnings.

This little country that inspires the biggest things, your best days are still ahead. Our greatest triumphs, in America and Ireland alike, are still to come. And, Ireland, if anyone ever says otherwise, if anybody ever tells you that your problems are too big or your challenges are too great, that we can't do something, that we shouldn't even try, think about all that we've done together. Remember that whatever hardships the winter may bring, springtime is always just around the corner. And if they keep on arguing with you, just respond with a simple creed: *Is feidir linn*. Yes, we can. Yes, we can. *Is feidir linn*.

For all you've contributed to the character of the United States of America and the spirit of the world, thank you. And may God bless the eternal friendship between our two great nations.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you, Dublin. Thank you, Ireland.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:55 p.m. at College Green. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Enda Kenny and President Mary P. McAleese of Ireland; musicians the Corrigan Brothers; and his cousin Henry Healy of Moneygall, Ireland. He also referred to the National Basketball Association's Chicago Bulls.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the Executive Order Authorizing the Implementation of Certain Sanctions Set Forth in the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996

May 23, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq*.) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that takes additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995, and implements the existing statutory requirements of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–172) (50 U.S.C. 1701 note) (ISA), as amended by, *inter alia*, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–195) (CISADA).

In Executive Order 12957, the President found that the actions and policies of the Government of Iran threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. To deal with that threat, the President in Executive Order 12957 declared a national emergency and imposed prohibitions on certain transactions with respect to the development of Iranian petroleum resources. To further respond to that threat, Executive Order 12959 of May 6, 1995, imposed comprehensive trade and financial sanctions on Iran. Executive Order 13059 of August 19, 1997, consolidated and clarified the previous orders. To take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12957 and to implement section 105(a) of CISADA, I issued Executive Order 13553 on September 28, 2010, to impose sanctions on officials of the Government of Iran and other persons acting on behalf of the Government of Iran determined to be responsible for or complicit in certain serious human rights abuses.

In CISADA, which I signed into law on July 1, 2010, the Congress found that the illicit nuclear activities of the Government of Iran, along with its development of unconventional weapons and ballistic missiles and its support for international terrorism, threaten the security of the United States. To address the potential connection between Iran's illicit nuclear program and its energy sector, CISADA amended ISA to expand the types of activities that are sanctionable under that Act. ISA now requires that sanctions be imposed or waived for persons that are determined to have made certain investments in Iran's energy sector or to have engaged in certain activities relating to Iran's refined petroleum sector. In addition to expanding the types of sanctionable energy-related activities, CISADA added new sanctions that can be imposed pursuant to ISA.

This order is intended to implement the statutory requirements of ISA. Certain ISA sanctions require action by the private sector, and the order will further the implementation of those ISA sanctions by providing authority under IEEPA to the Secretary of the Treasury to take certain actions with respect to those sanctions. The order states that the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall take the following actions necessary to implement the sanctions selected, imposed, and maintained on a person by the President or by the Secretary of State, pursuant to authority that I have delegated:

- with respect to section 6(a)(3) of ISA, prohibit any United States financial institution from making loans or providing credits to the person consistent with section 6(a)(3) of ISA;
- with respect to section 6(a)(6) of ISA, prohibit any transactions in foreign exchange that are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and in which the person has any interest;
- with respect to section 6(a)(7) of ISA, prohibit any transfers of credit or payments between financial institutions or by, through, or to any financial institution, to the extent that such transfers or payments are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and involve any interest of the person;
- with respect to section 6(a)(8) of ISA, block all property and interests in property that are in the United States, that come within the United States, or that are or come within the possession or control of any United States person, including any overseas branch, of the person, and provide that such property and interests in property may not be transferred, paid, exported, withdrawn, or otherwise dealt in; or
- with respect to section 6(a)(9) of ISA, restrict or prohibit imports of goods, technology, or services, directly or indirectly, into the United States from the person.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA and the relevant provisions of ISA, and to employ all powers granted to the United States Government by the relevant provision of ISA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All executive agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
May 23, 2011.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on Tornado Destruction in the Midwest From London, England
May 24, 2011

Good morning, everybody. Before our day starts here in England, I wanted to say a few words about the devastating storms that we've seen in Missouri, in Minnesota, and across the Midwest.

Like all Americans, we have been monitoring what's been taking place very closely and have been heartbroken by the images that we've seen in Joplin, Missouri, in particular. The devastation is comparable and may end up exceeding some of the devastation that we saw in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, just a few weeks ago.

So far, we know that over 100 people lost their lives, others remain missing, and hundreds more are injured. And obviously, our thoughts and prayers are with the families who are suffering at this moment. And all we can do is let them know that all of America cares deeply about them and that we are going to do absolutely everything we can to make sure that they recover.

These storms often strike without warning, as we saw a little further south over the last couple of weeks. And it's going to be important for us to make sure that we are sustaining our efforts at rebuilding after the news cameras leave. We can make sure that the families and communities upended by these storms have everything they need to pull through. And in that regard, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano as well as I have spoken with Missouri Governor Jay Nixon. We've offered him not only our condolences, but we've told him that we will give him every ounce of resources that the Federal Government may have that we can bring to bear on this situation.

At my direction, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and Deputy Administrator Rich Serino have traveled to Missouri to make sure our Federal Government is working hand in hand with State and local officials to give them the help that they need. And on Sunday, I myself will travel to Missouri to talk with folks who've been affected, to talk to local officials about our response effort, and hopefully, to pray with folks and give them whatever assurance and comfort I can that the entire country is going to be behind them.

Now, these storms that came this weekend obviously compounded what has already been an extraordinary storm season throughout the Midwest and in the South. We understand that there are more storms that are forecast today. So the thing I think I want to emphasize more than anything else: It is critical that Americans in affected areas heed storm warnings and take the lead of your local officials.

I know that a lot of people are wondering how they'll get through the coming days or months or even years. But I want everybody in Joplin, everybody in Missouri, everybody in Minnesota, everybody across the Midwest, to know that we are here for you. The American people are by your side. We're going to stay there until every home is repaired, until every neighborhood is rebuilt, until every business is back on its feet. That's my commitment, and that's the American people's commitment.

Thanks very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:34 a.m. at Winfield House.

Statement on Chrysler Group LLC
May 24, 2011

Chrysler's repayment of its outstanding loans to the U.S. Treasury and American taxpayers marks a significant milestone for the turnaround of Chrysler and the countless communities and families who rely on the American auto industry. This announcement comes 6 years ahead of schedule and just 2 years after emerging from bankruptcy, allowing Chrysler to build on its progress and continue to grow as the economy recovers. Supporting the Ameri-

can auto industry required making some tough decisions, but I was not willing to walk away from the workers at Chrysler and the communities that rely on this iconic American company. I said if Chrysler and all its stakeholders were willing to take the difficult steps necessary to become more competitive, America would stand by them, and we did. While there is more work to be done, we are starting to see stronger sales, additional shifts at plants, and signs of strength in the auto industry and our economy, a true testament to the resolve and determination of American workers across the Nation.

Statement on the Election of Kathleen C. Hochul to the United States House of Representatives
May 24, 2011

I want to extend my congratulations to Congresswoman-elect Kathy Hochul for her victory in New York's 26th Congressional District. Kathy and I both believe that we need to create jobs, grow our economy, and reduce the deficit in order to outcompete other nations and win the future. Kathy has shown through her victory and throughout her career that she will fight for the families and businesses in western New York, and I look forward to working with her when she gets to Washington.

Memorandum on Federal Fleet Performance
May 24, 2011

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Federal Fleet Performance

The Federal Government operates the largest fleet of light duty vehicles in America. We owe a responsibility to American citizens to lead by example and contribute to meeting our national goals of reducing oil imports by one-third by 2025 and putting one million advanced vehicles on the road by 2015.

Living up to that responsibility means the Federal fleet should operate only as many vehicles as needed to work efficiently, leveraging Federal purchasing dollars to build manufacturing capacity for more alternative fueled vehicles, and reducing petroleum consumption through efficiency and alternative fuels.

In Executive Order 13514 of October 5, 2009, Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance, my Administration set a goal of reducing petroleum use in the Federal fleet. In order to provide guidance to executive departments and agencies (agencies) to help achieve my Administration's Federal fleet performance goals, and to ensure that agencies are in compliance with Executive Order 13514, I hereby direct the following:

Section 1. Vehicle Technologies. (a) By December 31, 2015, all new light duty vehicles leased or purchased by agencies must be alternative fueled vehicles, such as hybrid or electric, compressed natural gas, or biofuel. Moreover, agency alternative fueled vehicles must, as soon as practicable, be located in proximity to fueling stations with available alternative fuels, and be operated on the alternative fuel for which the vehicle is designed. Where practicable, agencies should encourage development of commercial infrastructure for alternative fuel or provide flex fuel and alternative fuel pumps and charging stations at Federal fueling sites.

(b) Pursuant to motor vehicle management regulations, set forth at 41 C.F.R. 102–34.50, executive fleets are required to achieve maximum fuel efficiency; be limited in motor vehicle body size, engine size, and optional equipment to what is essential to meet agency mission; and be midsize or smaller sedans, except

where larger sedans are essential to the agency mission. Within 180 days of the date of this memorandum, any executive fleet vehicles that are larger than a midsize sedan or do not comply with alternative fueled vehicle requirements must be disclosed on agency websites.

(c) The Department of Energy shall assist the United States Postal Service (USPS) in evaluating the best alternative fuel technologies for the USPS fleet.

Sec. 2. Optimum Fleet Size. Within 90 days of the date of this memorandum, the General Services Administration (GSA) shall develop and distribute to agencies a Vehicle Allocation Methodology (VAM) for determining the optimum inventory with emphasis placed on eliminating unnecessary or non-essential vehicles from an agency's fleet inventory and ensuring lifecycle cost-effectiveness of maintaining such inventory. In addition, the VAM shall address composition for agencies' light duty fleets based on their missions. In doing so, the GSA shall consider existing Federal VAMs as appropriate. The VAM shall assist agencies in selecting vehicle options based on lifecycle cost analysis, including projected fuel costs, warranty, operations, mileage, maintenance, and disposal.

Sec. 3. Fleet Management. (a) Within 180 days of the GSA's dissemination of the VAM referenced in section 2 of this memorandum, agencies shall determine their optimal fleet inventory using the VAM, and shall post their optimal fleet inventory targets on agency websites. At the same time, agencies shall submit to the Administrator of General Services (Administrator) fleet management plans to achieve these targets no later than December 31, 2015.

(b) Within 30 days of receiving agency fleet management plans, the Administrator shall submit a summary of the plans to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and to the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality.

(c) Within 90 days of receiving agency fleet management plans, the Administrator shall provide each agency and military service with recommendations for the acquisition of alternative fueled vehicles to implement fleet optimization plans, including shared fleet-on-demand services where applicable.

(d) Agencies shall incorporate new fleet management plans into their Annual Strategic Sustainability Performance Plans prepared in furtherance of Executive Order 13514, beginning with their June 2012 plan submission.

Sec. 4. Applicability. (a) With respect to law enforcement and emergency vehicles, the GSA shall, within 180 days of the date of this memorandum, and in coordination with the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice, and the Treasury, and other appropriate agencies, issue guidance to agencies on the applicability and implementation of alternative fueled vehicle requirements.

(b) Consistent with the guidance developed in section 4(a) of this memorandum, the head of an agency may exempt vehicles used for law enforcement, protective, emergency response, or military tactical operations of that agency from the provisions of this memorandum.

(c) This memorandum shall apply to the activities, personnel, resources, and facilities of each agency that are located within the United States. The head of an agency may apply this memorandum to activities, personnel, resources, and facilities of the agency that are not located within the United States, to the extent the head of the agency determines that doing so is in the interest of the United States.

Sec. 5. Definitions. (a) "Alternative fueled vehicle" means an alternative fuel vehicle as defined by Executive Order 13514 and an alternative fueled vehicle as defined by 42 U.S.C. 13211(3), including a "new qualified fuel cell motor vehicle" as defined in 26 U.S.C. 30B(b)(3) and a "new qualified hybrid motor vehicle" as defined in 26 U.S.C. 30B(d)(3).

(b) "Agency" means an agency as defined in Executive Order 13514.

(c) "United States" means the fifty States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands, and associated territorial waters and airspace.

Sec. 6. General Provisions. (a) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with

applicable law, including international trade obligations, and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(b) Nothing in this memorandum shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(1) authority granted by law to a department, agency, or the head thereof; or

(2) functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(c) This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

BARACK OBAMA

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom in London, England
May 24, 2011

Queen Elizabeth II. Mr. President, I am delighted to welcome you and Mrs. Obama to London. Prince Philip and I are so glad that you are visiting the United Kingdom again.

We have fond memories of our first meeting during the G–20 conference in London in 2009. It also gave me much pleasure to welcome Mrs. Obama and your two daughters here almost 2 years ago.

Your visit to this country inevitably reminds us of our shared history, our common language, and our strong intellectual and cultural links. It also reminds us that your country twice came to the rescue of the free and democratic world when it was facing military disaster. On each occasion, after the end of those destructive wars, the generosity of the United States made a massive contribution to our economic recovery.

Today, the United States remains our most important ally, and our two nations contribute to the security and prosperity of our peoples and of the world through shared national interests.

But our relationship goes far beyond our military and diplomatic ties. In your Inaugural Address, you spoke to the American people of the values that lay at the heart of your Nation's success—honesty and hard work, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism—and of the sturdy alliances and enduring convictions with which your Nation had met past challenges and would meet future ones too.

If I may say so, these values underscore much of the life of the United Kingdom also. Together with our alliance, they continue to guide our actions as we confront the challenges of a changing world.

It is unfortunate that there are so many troubles facing the world today. But we are encouraged that in most respects, our two countries see these problems in the same light. For this reason, we have been able to act together in fields as varied as science, research, and higher education, to find solutions or to at least make progress towards tackling so many of the social and economic difficulties that confront nations in all parts of the globe.

Entertainment may not be so obviously an example of our close ties, but it forms part of the lives of a great many of our people. Over the years, we have enjoyed some of America's most spectacular musical productions and any number of what we call films, which you might prefer to call movies. [*Laughter*] In return, British films and theatrical productions have achieved considerable success in your country. This exchange of people and projects has enlarged and invigorated our common language, although I think you will agree, we do not always use it in quite the same way. [*Laughter*]

Mr. President, I firmly believe that the strength of our links and many shared interests will continue to ensure that when the United States and the United Kingdom stand together, our people and other people of good will

around the world will be more secure and can become more prosperous.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are here to celebrate the tried, tested, and yes, special relationship between our two countries. I, therefore, ask you now to join me in raising your glasses to the continued health, happiness, and prosperity of the people of the United States of America, and especially to the health of President and Mrs. Obama.

[*At this point, a toast was offered, and the band played the American national anthem.*]

President Obama. Your Majesty, thank you for your extraordinarily generous remarks, for the invitation you extended for our first state visit in Europe, and for the warm friendship that you've shown both Michelle and myself on both of our visits to Buckingham Palace.

I bring warm greetings from tens of millions of Americans who claim British ancestry, including me, through my mother's family. I bring warm greetings from Malia and Sasha, who adored you even before you let them ride on a carriage on the palace grounds. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Cameron, Mrs. Cameron, and distinguished guests, it is a great honor to join you again in this great country as we reaffirm the enduring bonds between our two nations and reinforce this special relationship.

I must say, though, this dinner is a humbling reminder of the fleeting nature of Presidencies and Prime Ministerships. Your Majesty's reign has spanned about a dozen of each, and counting. That makes you both a living witness to the power of our alliance and a chief source of its resilience.

Our alliance is a commitment that speaks to who we are. As Winston Churchill said on a visit to the United States, "Above all, among the English-speaking peoples, there must be the union of hearts based upon convictions and common ideals."

While our challenges have changed since Churchill's time, when we fought together to preserve our very democracies, our adherence to those values have not. Our relationship rests on common language, common history, common adherence to the rule of law, the rights of men and women—the very ideals born in this nation. And yet our relationship never rests.

As we approach the 10th anniversary of 9/11, I'm particularly grateful for the solidarity that the United Kingdom has shown to America over the past decade. From that day to this, you have been our closest partner in the struggle to protect our people from terrorist attacks and violent extremism around the world, despite very heavy sacrifices here. And allow me to pay tribute to the contributions of your military forces, which have stood shoulder to shoulder with us for decades.

And as we confront the challenges of the 21st century together, we can have confidence in the partnership that our two countries share, based on the rock-solid foundation built during Queen Elizabeth's lifetime of extraordinary service to her nation and to the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, please stand with me and raise your glasses as I propose a toast: To Her Majesty the Queen——

[*The band began to play the British national anthem.*]

——for the vitality of the special relationship between our peoples, and in the words of Shakespeare, "To this blessed plot, this Earth, this realm, this England."

To the Queen.

Queen Elizabeth II. That's very kind.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:47 p.m. at Buckingham Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Samantha G. Cameron, wife of Prime Minister Cameron. The Queen referred to her husband Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom in London

May 25, 2011

Prime Minister Cameron. Thank you, and apologies for keeping you waiting. It's a pleasure to welcome President Obama here today.

We've just been having a barbecue in the gardens of Number 10 Downing Street with some of our service—armed-service personnel from the United States and from the U.K. And it was a great reminder of the incredible debt that we owe all of them and their families for their service, for their sacrifice, for all they do to keep us safe. It was a great event, and it was wonderful to have Barack and Michelle there.

It was also probably the first time in history, as we stood behind that barbecue, that I can say a British Prime Minister has given an American President a bit of a grilling. [*Laughter*] So I'm going to hold onto that.

Over the past year, I've got to know the President well. And whether it's in routine situations like sitting round the G–8 table or the slightly less routine of getting a phone call in the middle of the night, I have come to value not just his leadership and courage, but the fact that to all the big international issues of our time, he brings thoughtful consideration and reason.

And I know that today, Mr. President, you'll be thinking of the dreadful tornado in Missouri and all those who've lost livelihoods and lost their lives and loved ones. And our hearts in Britain go out to all those people too.

Barack and I know well the shared history of our countries. From the beaches of Normandy to the Imjin River, our soldiers have fought together. From labs in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Cambridge, England, our scientists have decoded DNA and cured diseases together. And in millions of interactions every day, including our massive business relationship, our people forge friendships together.

That is what makes this relationship special. But what makes it essential is that it's not just about history or sentiment, it is a living, working partnership. It is essential to our security, and it's essential for our prosperity.

And I feel every day just how important this partnership is. The President and I, together with my Deputy Prime Minister, have just had some excellent discussions. We've been talking today about the two things we care about most: getting our people jobs and keeping our people safe. Because every night, millions of British and American people take the same worries to bed with them. They're asking if they can find a good job, if they're going to get a paycheck next month, and if there will be work for their children when they grow up.

The stark truth of the world today is that no country is owed a living. We've got to pay our way, and we've got to earn our way. And that is what the President and I are determined to do. Barack and I did not come into politics to cut public spending, but neither did we seek office to see our great economies decline or to land our children with unsustainable debts. And that is why in the second half of this decade, we're making sure that debt ratios will be falling on both sides of the Atlantic.

At the same time, we're investing in our roads and railways, in science and innovation, and above all, in our young people. And down the line, the success of all this won't be measured in export figures or trade flows, it will be in the feelings of the factory worker, whether they're in Phoenix or the shopkeeper in Liverpool or the engineer in Ohio: the people who know if they work hard, then prosperity will be there for them and the promise of a better life there for their children.

As well as the economy, the President and I had some very good discussions on security. Now, Americans and Brits, you don't need to explain terrorism to one another. Both our people have suffered at our—at its hands, and indeed they have died together.

My wife Samantha was in Manhattan on 9/11, and I'll never forget the 5 hours of trying to get hold of her. And she'll never forget the New Yorkers that she met that day or the sense of solidarity that she felt that day and that we have

felt ever since that day. And today, as we come up to its 10th anniversary, we should remember the spirit of that city and the sympathy we feel with those who lost their loved ones.

Now, there are those who say that this terrorist threat is beyond our control, and we passionately believe that is wrong. We can defeat Al Qaida, and the events of recent months give us an opportunity to turn the tide on their terror once and for all.

I believe there are three actions we must take. First, we must continue to destroy their terrorist network, and I congratulate the President on his operation against bin Laden. This was not just a victory for justice, but a strike right at the heart of international terrorism.

In this vital effort, we must continue to work with Pakistan. People are asking about our relationship, so we need to be clear. Pakistan has suffered more from terrorism than any country in the world. Their enemy is our enemy. So, far from walking away, we've got to work even more closely with them.

At the same time, this is a vital year in Afghanistan. British and American forces are fighting side by side in Helmand, right at the heart of this operation. We've broken the momentum of the insurgency, and even in the Taliban's heartland, in Kandahar and central Helmand, they're on the back foot. Now is the moment to step up our efforts to reach a political settlement. The Taliban must make a decisive split from Al Qaida, give up violence, and join a political process that will bring lasting peace to that country. We are agreed to give this the highest priority in the months ahead.

Second, we must reach a conclusion to the Arab-Israel peace process. Again, I congratulated the President on his recent speech on the Middle East, which was bold, it was visionary, and it set out what is needed in the clearest possible terms: an end to terror against Israelis and the restoration of dignity to the Palestinians, two states living side by side and in peace.

Yes, the road has been, and will be, long and arduous, but the prize is clear. Conclude the peace process, and you don't just bring security to the region, you deny extremists one of their most profound and endearing—enduring recruiting sergeants, weakening their calling and crippling their cause. That is why, whatever the difficulties, we must continue to press for a solution.

Our third action must be to help elevate the changes in North Africa and the Arab world from a moment in history to a turning point in history. We've seen some extraordinary things: protesters braving bullets, bloggers toppling dictators, people taking to the streets and making their own history. If global politics is about spreading peace and prosperity, then this is a once-in-a-generation moment to grab hold of.

It is not a time for us to shrink back and think about our own issues and interests. This is our issue, and this is massively in our interests. Those people in Tahrir Square and Tripoli just want what we have: a job and a voice. And we all share in their success or failure. If they succeed, there is new hope for those living there and there is the hope of a better and safer world for all of us. But if they fail, if that hunger is denied, then some young people in that region will continue to listen to the poisonous narrative of extremism.

So the President and I are agreed we will stand with those who work for freedom. This is the message we'll take to the G–8 tomorrow when we push for a major program of economic and political support for those countries seeking reform. And this is why we mobilized the international community to protect the Libyan people from Colonel Qadhafi's regime, why we'll continue to enforce U.N. resolutions with our allies, and why we restate our position once more: It is impossible to imagine a future for Libya with Qadhafi still in power. He must go.

In all of these actions, we must be clear about our ambitions. Barack and I came of age in the 1980s and nineties. We saw the end of the cold war and the victory over communism. We saw the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein and the world coming together to liberate that country. Throughout it all, we saw Presidents and Prime Ministers standing together for freedom.

Today, we feel just as passionately about extending freedom as those who came before us, but we also know that idealism without realism

does no good for anyone. We have learned the lessons of history. Democracy is built from the ground up. You've got to work with the grain of other cultures and not against them. Real change takes time.

And it's because of this we share the view that our partnership will not just continue, but it will get stronger. And this is a partnership that goes beyond foreign affairs. At home, we have similar goals: to bring more responsibility to our societies and to bring transparency and accountability to our governments. In all these ambitions, our countries will continue to learn from each other and work with each other.

And as ever, it has been a pleasure to talk to the President and an honor to have him with us today.

Mr. President.

President Obama. Thank you, David. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. I am very pleased to be back in the United Kingdom. I note that you have arranged for typical London weather these past 2 days, and I am very grateful for that.

I want to thank Her Majesty the Queen and the British people for the extraordinary welcome that has been extended to me and Michelle. It's a shining example of the genuine warmth and affection that our two nations feel towards one another.

Since David took office last spring, I believe we've now met or spoken at least two dozen times. We may be leaders from different political traditions, but on a whole host of issues, we see eye to eye. We even took the same side in a epic match of doubles table tennis against some local students yesterday, and we won't rehash the results of that.

The relationship between our two countries is one that's not just based on warm sentiment or common history, although those things exist. It's built on shared ideals and shared values. As David said, it is a special relationship and an essential relationship. I believe that it is stronger than it has ever been, and I'm committed to making sure that it stays that way.

The successful meetings we've had and the joint initiatives we're announcing today represent the depth and breadth of our relationship. We discussed our efforts to strengthen the global recovery and create good jobs for our people. The investment relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom is the largest in the world, one that accounts for nearly 1 million jobs in each of our economies. We believe we can make that relationship even stronger with deeper cooperation in areas critical to our future prosperity, like higher education and science and innovation; areas critical to our national security, like cybercrime; and areas vital to the stability of the world, including international development.

During our discussions today, we reviewed our progress in Afghanistan, where our brave service men and women have fought side by side to break the Taliban's momentum and where we are preparing to turn a corner. We reaffirmed the importance of beginning the transition to Afghan lead for security this year and completing that transition by 2014.

We discussed the opportunity that exists for promoting reconciliation and a political settlement, which must be an Afghan-led process. President Karzai has made it clear that he will talk to anyone who is willing to end the violence, split with Al Qaida, and accept the Afghan Constitution. And we welcome the positive cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan on that front.

At the same time, the Prime Minister and I both agree that our nations have a long-term interest in ensuring that Afghanistan never again becomes a launching pad for attacks against our people. So alongside our NATO allies and partners, we're committed to a strong and enduring partnership with the people of Afghanistan.

As historic change unfolds across the Middle East and North Africa, we agree that the pursuit of self-determination must be driven by the peoples of the region and not imposed from the outside. But we are both committed to doing everything that we can to support peoples who reach for democracy and leaders who implement democratic reform.

Tomorrow we'll discuss with our G–8 partners how those of us in the wider international community can best support nations that make

the reforms necessary to build a framework for democracy, freedom, and prosperity for their people.

At the same time, we will continue to strongly oppose the use of violence against protesters and any efforts to silence those who yearn for freedom and dignity and basic human rights. And that's one of the reasons that we are working together in Libya, alongside with our NATO allies and partners, to protect the Libyan people. And we will continue those operations until Qadhafi's attacks on civilians cease. Time is working against Qadhafi, and he must step down from power and leave Libya to the Libyan people.

We also discussed the situation in Syria, where the Syrian people have shown great courage in their demands for a democratic transition. The United States welcomes the EU's decision to impose sanctions on President Asad, and we're increasing pressure on him and his regime in order to end his policy of oppression and begin the change that people seek.

We discussed Yemen, where the Yemeni people call for greater opportunity and prosperity and a nation that is more unified and more secure, and we expressed our joint concern of the deteriorating situation on the ground there. We applauded the leadership of the Gulf Cooperation Council in seeking an orderly and peaceful resolution to the crisis, and we call on President Salih to move immediately on his commitment to transfer power.

And at a time when so many in the region are casting off the burdens of the past, we agree that the push for a lasting peace that ends the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and resolves all claims is more urgent than ever. I appreciate the Prime Minister's support for the principles that I laid out last week on borders and security, which can provide a sound basis from which the two sides can negotiate.

As increasing tensions in the Abyei region threaten to derail Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement, we're working closely together to encourage the parties to recommit to a peaceful resolution to the crisis and calling on the rapid reinforcement of the U.N.'s peacekeeping presence in the region.

We also reviewed our close cooperation when it comes to countering terrorist threats, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery to states like Iran, and our unrelenting efforts to keep our people safe.

And finally, we launched a joint initiative to exchange the best ideas and practices when it comes to supporting our veterans and our military families.

Today, before we came here, Michelle and I joined David and Samantha for a outstanding barbecue at Number 10 for Active Duty members of our militaries, along with their spouses, who make extraordinary sacrifices as well. It was a wonderful event and a moving reminder of the long line of American and British servicemembers who've made heavy and heroic sacrifices in the joint defense of our shared values that our people hold so dear.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you not only for the barbecue, but for the opportunity to spend this very productive time at Number 10 with you and your team. I enjoy my visits here, as always, and I have confidence that our special relationship will continue to grow even stronger in the months and years ahead. Thank you very much.

Prime Minister Cameron. Thank you, Barack. Thank you very much.

Nick Robinson from the BBC.

Libya/Afghanistan/United Kingdom-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you very much indeed. Prime Minister, can you confirm that you plan to escalate the war in Libya by sending ground attack helicopters? And, Mr. President, can you confirm that United States will sit that particular mission out?

And a general question for you, if I could. You've talked about an old war in Afghanistan and a new one in Libya. Is your partnership really that different than the one between Bush and Blair?

Prime Minister Cameron. Well, thank you for that. Lots of questions in there. First of all, the President and I agree that we should be turning up the heat in Libya. I believe the pres-

sure is on that regime. You see it in the fact that the rebels have successfully liberated much of Misurata. You see it in the success in other parts of the country. You see it in the strength of the coalition. You see it in the growth of the National Transitional Council. So I believe we should be turning up that pressure.

And on Britain's part, we will be looking at all of the options for turning up that pressure, obviously within the terms of U.N. Resolution 1973, because we believe we need to keep enforcing that resolution, protecting civilians, pressurizing that regime so that the Libyan people have a chance to decide their own future. And within that, those are the options we'll look at.

You asked the question about this relationship and past relationships. I think every relationship between a President and a Prime Minister is different. I would say both of us strongly believe in the special relationship. We both called it an essential relationship. But we believe you have—as I said in my speech—we have to learn the lessons of history about how best we promote the values that we share.

And that means, yes, going with the grain of other cultures; it means, yes, having a patient understanding that building democracy takes time and you have to work on the building blocks of democracy and not believe this all can be done in an instant. But I believe in that partnership, we're extremely strong together in wanting to see the same outcomes, whether that's in Afghanistan, where we want to see a peaceful and stable Afghanistan that no longer requires the presence of foreign troops to keep it free from terrorism, and we want to see a Libya where people have the chance to decide their own future.

But we are doing things in a different way. We have ruled out occupying forces, invading armies. We are doing what we can to enforce Resolution 1973 and allowing the Libyan people to choose their own future. And we're very committed to doing that work together.

President Obama. Well, first of all, I do think that we've made enormous progress in Libya. We have saved lives as a consequence of our concerted actions. I think it is important to note that we did so under a U.N. mandate and as part of a broad-based international coalition that includes Arab countries. And I absolutely agree that given the progress that has been made over the last several weeks, that Qadhafi and his regime need to understand that there will not be a letup in the pressure that we are applying. And the United Kingdom, the United States, and our other partners are putting a wide range of resources, within—consistent with the U.N. mandate, in order to achieve that pressure. And I think we will ultimately be successful.

The goal is to make sure that the Libyan people can make a determination about how they want to proceed and that they'll be finally free of 40 years of tyranny and they can start creating the institutions required for self-determination.

So in terms of historical analogies, I just want to underscore this is not the United Kingdom and the United States alone. We have a broad range of partners under an international mandate designed to save lives and ensure that we did not have the sort of massacre that would lead us then to look back and say to ourselves, why did we stand by and do nothing?

With respect to Afghanistan, similarly, we have a broad-based international mandate and a broad-based international coalition designed to make sure that Afghanistan does not serve as a base for attacks against our people. We've discussed, consistent with what we said in Lisbon during our NATO summit, that this will be a year of transition because of the work that we've done and the enormous sacrifices that both our militaries have given. We are in a position now to transition, to start transitioning to an Afghan-led security process. And at the same time, we're going to be engaging in the sort of diplomatic work that is required for an ultimate political solution to the problems there. And I'm confident that we can achieve it.

I think that there's no doubt that the United States and the United Kingdom have a unique relationship. And that is going to be consistent regardless of who the President and the Prime Minister is, and it's going to be consistent regardless of what parties we come from. There's so much that binds us together that it is not

surprising that we are typically, on the international stage, going to be working together as opposed to at cross purposes.

But as David mentioned, I think that the one thing that we have learned is that even as we promote the values and ideals that we care about, even as we make sure that our security interests are met, that we are using military power in a strategic and careful way; that we are making sure that as we promote democracy and human rights, that we understand the limits of what the military alone can achieve; and that we're mindful that ultimately, these regions are going to be—that the fate of these regions are going to be determined by the people there themselves and that we're going to have to work in partnership with them.

And that, I think, is the best example of alliance leadership, and it's something that I'm very proud to be a part of.

Julie Pace [Associated Press].

Libya

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You've said that Muammar Qadhafi's exit from Libya is inevitable and that the U.S. will continue with the campaign until his attacks stop. Does that also mean that you will commit the U.S. to that campaign until Qadhafi is removed from power? And would you be willing to commit additional U.S. resources if that meant speeding up Qadhafi's exit?

And, Prime Minister Cameron, do you believe that the U.S. and other NATO allies should increase their role in the Libya campaign, as other British lawmakers have suggested? Thank you.

President Obama. I have said from the outset that our goal, the reason that we intervened in Libya, was to protect the people on the ground and to give the Libyan people the space that they needed in order to bring about a change towards democracy. And I also was very clear in terms of how we were going to participate.

We moved very heavily on the front end, disabling their air defense systems, carrying the lion's share of the burden when it came to setting the stage for NATO operations, and then that—once the transfer took place to NATO command and control, that at that point, our primary role would be a whole range of support that utilized America's unique capabilities. That's what we're doing. I also ruled out us putting any ground forces in Libya.

We have proceeded consistent with that. There are times where, for example, with our Predator capabilities, we have a unique capacity that we've brought to bear, and we will continue to do that. And the Prime Minister and I consistently discuss on a regular basis what can we all do to make sure that that pressure continues to apply.

I do think that it is going to be difficult to meet the U.N. mandate of security for the Libyan people as long as Qadhafi and his regime are still attacking them. And so we are strongly committed to seeing the job through, making sure that, at minimum, Qadhafi doesn't have the capacity to send in a bunch of thugs to murder innocent civilians and to threaten them.

I believe that we have built enough momentum that as long as we sustain the course that we're on, that he is ultimately going to step down. And we will continue to work with our partners to achieve that.

So we have not put forward any artificial timeline in terms of how long this will take. My belief is, is that the more resolute that we are now, the more effective the coalition is in rallying all the resources that are available to it, that we're going to be able to achieve our mission in a timely fashion.

One last point, and this speaks to the issue of whether there are other additional U.S. capabilities that could be brought to bear. David and I both agree that we cannot put boots on the ground in Libya. Once you rule out ground forces, then there are going to be some inherent limitations to our air strike operations. It means that the opposition on the ground in Libya is going to have to carry out its responsibilities. And we're going to have to do effective coordination, and we are doing that with the opposition on the ground.

But I think that there may be a false perception that there are a whole bunch of secret

supereffective air assets that are in a warehouse somewhere that could just be pulled out and that would somehow immediately solve the situation in Libya. That's not the case.

The enormous sacrifices that are being made by the British, by the French, by ourselves, by the Danes, and others, we are bringing to bear an array of air power that has made a huge difference. But ultimately, this is going to be a slow, steady process in which we're able to wear down the regime forces and change the political calculations of the Qadhafi regime to the point where they finally realize that they're not going to control this country, the Libyan people are going to control this country. And as long as we remain resolute, I think we're going to be able to achieve that mission.

But there's not a whole host of new and different assets that somehow could be applied, partly because we've been extraordinarily successful in avoiding significant civilian casualties. And that's been part of our goal, that's been part of our mission, is making sure that we are targeting regime forces in a way that does not result in enormous collateral damage. And that means we may have to sometimes be more patient than people would like. But ultimately, I think it promises greater success, and it sustains our coalition and support for it, not just here, but in the Arab world as well.

Prime Minister Cameron. Thank you. I so agree that the two key things here are patience and persistence. That is what the alliance is demonstrating and needs to go on demonstrating.

Julie, I'd just make two points. First of all, I think the President and I completely agree on this point of, of course, the U.N. resolution is not about regime change; the U.N. resolution is about protecting civilians from attack and taking all necessary measures to do so. With that said, most political leaders, including the two here, have said it's hard to see how you implement U.N. Resolution 1973 with Qadhafi still in control of his country, which is why we've been so clear about Qadhafi needing to go and needing to leave Libya.

In terms of the U.S. role, I would make this point, which I'm not sure is widely understood in Britain or in Europe—is already a huge number of the sorties and the support and the air assets that are actually bringing the pressure to bear are U.S. assets. There was this enormous effort at the beginning, as the President said, but also a sustained amount of assets that have been used.

And as the President said, there are also the unique assets and capabilities that the U.S. has that others don't have that are so vital. And as he said, we all have to ask what is it that we can all do to make sure the pressure is really brought to bear. That is what the British are doing, the French are doing, the Americans are doing. And I know we'll discuss this in the margins of the G–8.

But I'd just make this point as well. As well as the military pressure, don't underestimate the pressure of building up the opposition, the contacts we have with the National Transitional Council, the fact that they are opening offices and building support and strength from the allies. Don't underestimate the extent to which we're now cutting off oil products to the regime, because they're using them in their tanks and their other military equipment, and also the other steps that I know Americans and others are taking to try and release Libyan assets back into the hands of the National Transitional Council and recognizing them as the right interlocutor for us to speak to.

So in all those ways, we can keep this pressure up over the coming period while showing patience and persistence at the same time.

Tom Bradby from ITV.

Global Economy/Extradition of Gary McKinnon to the U.S.

Q. Mr. President, you've talked about the need for robust action on your country's deficit and debt positions. Do you agree with the Prime Minister's supporters that he led the way on the issue, or do you feel that, in fact, he has traveled too far and too fast?

And could I just ask you both, as a sidebar, this time last year, we talked about the case of computer hacker Gary McKinnon, on which the Prime Minister has expressed very clear views. You said you would work together to find a solution. So have you found one?

President Obama. Well, on your second question, Mr. McKinnon, we have proceeded through all the processes required under our extradition agreements. It is now in the hands of the British legal system. We have confidence in the British legal system coming to a just conclusion. And so we await resolution and will be respectful of that process.

With respect to how we deal with debt and deficits, I said 2 years ago, the first time I came here, in April of 2009, the first G–20 summit that I attended, that each country is different and each country is going to have to make a range of decisions about how to—at that time—dig our way out of the worst recession that we'd experienced since the 1930s, at the same time that we put our countries on a path of sustainable growth that ultimately results in jobs and prosperity for our people and a growing middle class across the board.

And we've succeeded in the first part, which is to yank the world economy out of recession, and that was in large part due to concerted action between the United States, the United Kingdom, and other countries.

Now we've got that other challenge, which is how do we sustain growth in a way that's responsible and responsive to the needs of our people. That requires us to continue to make investments in education, science, technology, infrastructure, things that help our economies grow. But it also means governments that live within their means.

And obviously, the nature and role of the public sector in the United Kingdom is different than it has been in the United States. The pressures that each country are under from world capital markets are different. The nature of the debt and deficits are different. And as a consequence, the sequencing or pace may end up being different.

But the one thing that I'm absolutely clear about is David and I want to arrive at the same point, a point in which we're making sure that our governments are doing what they need to do to ensure broad-based prosperity, but doing so in a responsible way that doesn't mortgage our futures and leave a mountain of debt to future generations.

And the other point I think David and I would agree on is that this is going to be a constant process of trying some things, making adjustments. There are going to be opportunities for us to make investments. There are going to be other areas where we think those were good ideas at the time, programs that were started with the best of intentions, and it turns out they're not working as well as they should. If a program is not working well, we should get rid of it and put that money into programs that are working well. It means that we've got to make sure that we take a balanced approach and that there's a mix of cuts, but also thinking about how do we generate revenue so that there's a match between money going out and money coming in.

And each country is going to have to go through what is a difficult and painful process. What I'm confident about is that we're going to be able to come out of this stronger than we were before. And I think that both the people of the United Kingdom and the people of the United States want to see a government that's reflective of their values, the fact that they take their responsibilities seriously, they pay their bills, they make sure that their families are cared for, they make sacrifices where necessary in order to ensure that their children and their grandchildren are succeeding. And they want those same values reflected in their government, and I think that both our countries are going to be able to achieve that.

Prime Minister Cameron. Thank you. First of all, in the case of Gary McKinnon, I mean, I understand the widespread concern about this case, and it's not so much about the alleged offense, which everyone knows is a very serious offense; it's about the issue of the individual and the way they're treated and the operation of the legal system and, as the President said, making sure that legal system operates properly and carefully.

The case is currently in front of the Home Secretary, who has to consider reports about Gary's health and his well-being, and it's right that she does that in a proper and effectively quasi-judicial way.

I totally understand the anguish of his mother and his family about this issue. We must follow the proper processes and make sure this case is dealt with in the proper way. And I'm sure that that is the case.

On the issue of deficit reduction, I mean, I remember when we also spoke about this at the G–20, but even before that, when you first came here when you were running as a candidate. And I completely agree with Barack that each country is different and has different circumstances. I mean, Britain does not have a reserve currency. We're not in the same position as the U.S. with the dollar. And I think it was necessary for us to set out on the path of deficit reduction without delay after the election.

And I would argue the proof of that for the U.K. has been what has happened in capital markets. And as the President just said, capital markets treat different countries differently. Well, in the European context, what you've seen since the election is actually market interest rates in the U.K., bond yields effectively come down. Whereas you look at what's happened in Greece or in Portugal or other European countries, you've often seen those bond rates increase. That, in my view, is the risk we would have run if we had not set out on the path of deficit reduction.

But each country is different, but when I look across now and see what the U.S. and the U.K. are currently contemplating for the future, it's actually a relatively similar program in terms of trying to get on top of our deficits and make sure that debt is falling as a share of GDP. Because as the President said, we, in the end, share a very similar set of values about not wanting to load responsibility for these debts on our children and not wanting to shirk our own responsibilities for straightening out our own public finances.

So, as he said, we may take slightly different paths, but we want to end up in the same place. It's an extremely difficult thing to have to do—dealing with your public finances, getting on top of your deficit—but it's absolutely essential. And we've talked a lot today about national security. In the end, there's no national security unless you have economic security. And that's an argument that we have to make and win every day here in the United Kingdom.

President Obama. Christi Parsons [Chicago Tribune], last question.

Middle East Peace Process/Hamas/Ireland/Severe Weather in the Midwest

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Yesterday in his speech before Congress, the Israeli Prime Minister referred to the Palestinian right of return as "fantasy." And I wonder if that's a sentiment you agree with in any way. And also, if you could outline for us a little bit how you—your views on that issue, as well as the future of Jerusalem.

And, Mr. Prime Minister, if I may, you said at the top of this press conference that you consider the President's principles outlined last week to be bold and visionary and, in fact, what needs to be done. And I wonder if that means it makes you less open to the Palestinian campaign for recognition of statehood before the U.N. this fall. Thank you.

President Obama. My goal, as I set out in the speech I gave last week, is a Jewish State of Israel that is safe and secure and recognized by its neighbors and a sovereign state of Palestine in which the Palestinian people are able to determine their own fate and their own future. I am confident that can be achieved. It is going to require wrenching compromise by both sides.

Over the last decade, when negotiators have talked about how to achieve that outcome, there have been typically four issues that have been raised. One is the issue of what would the territorial boundaries of a new Palestinian state look like? Number two, how could Israel feel confident that its security needs were being met? Number three, how would the issue of Palestinian refugees be resolved? And number four, the issue of Jerusalem.

The last two questions are extraordinarily emotional. They go deep into how both the Palestinians and the Jewish people think about their own identities. Ultimately, they are going to be resolved by the two parties. I believe that those two issues can be resolved if there is the prospect and the promise that we can actually

get to a Palestinian state and a secure Jewish State of Israel.

And what my speech did was to say, let's begin the work with the very hard-nosed but transparent and less—perhaps less emotional issues of what would the territorial boundaries look like and what would Israeli security requirements entail.

And I believe that if the Palestinians and the Israelis begin talking about those two issues and get some resolution, they can start seeing on the horizon the possibility of a peace deal, they will then be in a position to have a—what would be a very difficult conversation about refugees and about Jerusalem.

That's not something that any party from the outside is going to be able to impose on them. But what I am absolutely certain of is that if they're not talking, we're not going to make any progress, and neither the Israeli people or the Palestinian people will be well served.

Let me just make one more comment about the prospects for a serious peace negotiation. The Israelis are properly concerned about the agreement that's been made between Fatah and Hamas. Hamas has not renounced violence. Hamas is an organization that has thus far rejected the recognition of Israel as a legitimate state. It is very difficult for Israelis to sit across the table and negotiate with a party that is denying your right to exist and has not renounced the right to send missiles and rockets into your territory.

So as much as it's important for the United States, as Israel's closest friend and partner, to remind them of the urgency of achieving peace, I don't want the Palestinians to forget that they have obligations as well. And they are going to have to resolve in a credible way the meaning of this agreement between Fatah and Hamas if we're going to have any prospect for peace moving forward.

As for the United Nations, I've already said—I said in the speech last week and I will repeat—the United Nations can achieve a lot of important work. What the United Nations is not going to be able to do is deliver a Palestinian state. The only way that we're going to see a Palestinian state is if Israelis and Palestinians agree on a just peace.

And so I strongly believe that for the Palestinians to take the United Nations route rather than the path of sitting down and talking with the Israelis is a mistake, that it does not serve the interests of the Palestinian people, it will not achieve their stated goal of achieving a Palestinian state. And the United States will continue to make that argument both in the United Nations and in our various meetings around the world.

Q. Do you agree with the comparison between Hamas and Al Qaida?

President Obama. I believe that Hamas, in its own description of its agenda, has not renounced violence and has not recognized the State of Israel. And until they do, it is very difficult to expect Israelis to have a serious conversation, because ultimately, they have to have confidence that a Palestinian state is one that is going to stick to its—to whatever bargain is struck, that if they make territorial compromises, if they arrive at a peace deal, that, in fact, that will mean the safety and security of the Jewish people and of Israel. And Hamas has not shown any willingness to make the kinds of concessions that Fatah has, and it's going to be very difficult for us to get a Palestinian partner on the other side of the table that is not observing the basic Quartet principles that we both believe—that both David and I believe in: the need to renounce violence, recognize the State of Israel, abide by previous agreements.

That is, I think, going to be a critical aspect of us being able to jump-start this process once again.

Prime Minister Cameron. Thank you. I described the President's speech as bold and visionary because I think it did an absolutely vital thing, which was to talk about '67 borders with land swaps. So as the President said, if you think about what both sides absolutely need to know to start this process, those two things are in place.

First, that the Israelis need to know that America and her allies like Britain will always stand up for Israel's right to exist, right to de-

fend herself, right to secure borders. That is absolutely vital that the Israelis know that their security is absolutely key to us. They need to know that.

But the second thing that needs to be done is the Palestinians need to know that we understand their need for dignity and for a Palestinian state, using the '67 borders and land swaps as the start point. That is, I think, what is so key to the speech that's been made. So neither side now has, I believe, the excuse to stand aside from talks.

On the specific issue of U.N. recognition, the President is entirely right that in the end, the Palestinian state will only come about if the Palestinians and the Israelis can agree to it coming about. That is the vital process that has to take place.

As for Britain, we don't believe the time for making a decision about the U.N. resolution—there isn't even one there at the moment—is right yet. We want to discuss this within the European Union and try and maximize the leverage and pressure that the European Union can bring, frankly, on both sides to get this vital process moving.

Both of us in recent days have been to the Republic of Ireland. I went on part of the Queen's historic trip, and I know Barack has just returned from a very successful trip. And when you look at what had to happen in Northern Ireland in order for peace to come about, is there has to be some recognition and understanding on each side of the other side.

And that is what I think is so crucial in what the President is saying about Hamas and Palestinian unity, which should in some ways be a welcome development if the Palestinians can have one group of people, but not unless those group of people are prepared to accept some of what the people they're going to negotiate with desperately need.

And that, in the end, is why the peace process in Northern Ireland was successful, because both sides had some understanding of what the other side needed for some dignity and for some peace. And that is what we badly need right now in the Middle East. And I think the President's speech has been a good step forward in really helping to make that happen. Thank you.

President Obama. Let me just pick up on what David said about Ireland. It was inspiring to see, after hundreds of years of conflict, people so rapidly reorienting how they thought about themselves, how they thought about those who they thought once were enemies. Her Majesty's visit had a profound effect on the entire country. And so it was an enormous source of hope. And I think it's a reminder that as tough as these things are, if you stick to it, if people of good will remain engaged, that ultimately even the worst of conflicts can be resolved.

But it is going to take time. And I remain optimistic, but not naively so, that this is going to be hard work and each side is going to have to look inward to determine what is in their long-term interests, and not just what are in their short-term tactical interests, which tends to perpetuate a conflict as opposed to solving it.

And finally, let me—also, David, I—just very briefly, thank you for expressing your condolences and concern about the people of Missouri. We have been battered by some storms not just this week, but over the last several months, the largest death toll and devastation that we've ever seen from tornadoes in the United States of America. Knowing that we've got friends here in the United Kingdom who care deeply and who offer their thoughts and prayers makes all the difference in the world. So thank you very much for that.

Prime Minister Cameron. Thank you. And the Guinness wasn't bad in Ireland, either.

President Obama. Yes, it was very good.

Prime Minister Cameron. Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:56 p.m. at Lancaster House. In his remarks, the President referred to Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; President Ali Abdallah Salih of Yemen; and Gary McKinnon, a British national whose extradition was sought by the United States for

allegedly penetrating U.S. Government computer systems in 2001 and 2002. Prime Minister Cameron referred to Deputy Prime Minister Nicholas Clegg and Home Secretary Theresa May of the United Kingdom; Janis Sharp, mother of Gary McKinnon; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization, who was killed in a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1. Reporters referred to former President George W. Bush; former Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel.

Remarks to the Parliament in London
May 25, 2011

Thank you very much. My Lord Chancellor, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Prime Minister, my Lords, and Members of the House of Commons: I have known few greater honors than the opportunity to address the mother of parliaments at Westminster Hall. I am told that the last three speakers here have been the Pope, Her Majesty the Queen, and Nelson Mandela, which is either a very high bar or the beginning of a very funny joke. [*Laughter*]

I come here today to reaffirm one of the oldest, one of the strongest alliances the world has ever known. It's long been said that the United States and the United Kingdom share a special relationship. And since we also share an especially active press corps, that relationship is often analyzed and overanalyzed for the slightest hint of stress or strain.

Of course, all relationships have their ups and downs. Admittedly, ours got off on the wrong foot with a small scrape about tea and taxes. [*Laughter*] There may also have been some hurt feelings when the White House was set on fire during the War of 1812. [*Laughter*] But fortunately, it's been smooth sailing ever since.

The reason for this close friendship doesn't just have to do with our shared history, our shared heritage, our ties of language and culture, or even the strong partnership between our governments. Our relationship is special because of the values and beliefs that have united our people through the ages.

Centuries ago, when kings, emperors, and warlords reigned over much of the world, it was the English who first spelled out the rights and liberties of man in the Magna Carta. It was here, in this very hall, where the rule of law first developed, courts were established, disputes were settled, and citizens came to petition their leaders.

Over time, the people of this nation waged a long and sometimes bloody struggle to expand and secure their freedom from the Crown. Propelled by the ideals of the Enlightenment, they would ultimately forge an English Bill of Rights and invest the power to govern in an elected parliament that's gathered here today.

What began on this island would inspire millions throughout the continent of Europe and across the world. But perhaps no one drew greater inspiration from these notions of freedom than your rabble-rousing colonists on the other side of the Atlantic. As Winston Churchill said, the ". . . Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, habeas corpus, trial by jury, and English common law find their most famous expression in the American Declaration of Independence."

For both of our nations, living up to the ideals enshrined in these founding documents has sometimes been difficult, has always been a work in progress. The path has never been perfect. But through the struggles of slaves and immigrants, women and ethnic minorities, former colonies and persecuted religions, we have learned better than most that the longing for freedom and human dignity is not English or American or Western, it is universal, and it beats in every heart. Perhaps that's why there are few nations that stand firmer, speak louder, and fight harder to defend democratic values around the world than the United States and the United Kingdom.

We are the allies who landed at Omaha and Gold, who sacrificed side by side to free a con-

tinent from the march of tyranny and help prosperity flourish from the ruins of war. And with the founding of NATO, a British idea, we joined a transatlantic alliance that has ensured our security for over half a century.

Together with our allies, we forged a lasting peace from a cold war. When the Iron Curtain lifted, we expanded our alliance to include the nations of Central and Eastern Europe and built new bridges to Russia and the former states of the Soviet Union. And when there was strife in the Balkans, we worked together to keep the peace.

Today, after a difficult decade that began with war and ended in recession, our nations have arrived at a pivotal moment once more. A global economy that once stood on the brink of depression is now stable and recovering. After years of conflict, the United States has removed 100,000 troops from Iraq, the United Kingdom has removed its forces, and our combat mission there has ended. In Afghanistan, we've broken the Taliban's momentum and will soon begin a transition to Afghan lead. And nearly 10 years after 9/11, we have disrupted terrorist networks and dealt Al Qaida a huge blow by killing its leader, Usama bin Laden.

Together, we have met great challenges. But as we enter this new chapter in our shared history, profound challenges stretch out before us. In a world where the prosperity of all nations is now inextricably linked, a new era of cooperation is required to ensure the growth and stability of the global economy. As new threats spread across borders and oceans, we must dismantle terrorist networks and stop the spread of nuclear weapons, confront climate change and combat famine and disease. And as a revolution races through the streets of the Middle East and North Africa, the entire world has a stake in the aspirations of a generation that longs to determine its own destiny.

These challenges come at a time when the international order has already been reshaped for a new century. Countries like China, India, and Brazil are growing by leaps and bounds. We should welcome this development, for it has lifted hundreds of millions from poverty around the globe and created new markets and opportunities for our own nations.

And yet, as this rapid change has taken place, it's become fashionable in some quarters to question whether the rise of these nations will accompany the decline of American and European influence around the world. Perhaps, the argument goes, these nations represent the future, and the time for our leadership has passed.

That argument is wrong. The time for our leadership is now. It was the United States and the United Kingdom and our democratic allies that shaped a world in which new nations could emerge and individuals could thrive. And even as more nations take on the responsibilities of global leadership, our alliance will remain indispensable to the goal of a century that is more peaceful, more prosperous, and more just.

At a time when threats and challenges require nations to work in concert with one another, we remain the greatest catalysts for global action. In an era defined by the rapid flow of commerce and information, it is our free market tradition, our openness, fortified by our commitment to basic security for our citizens, that offers the best chance of prosperity that is both strong and shared. As millions are still denied their basic human rights because of who they are or what they believe or the kind of government that they live under, we are the nations most willing to stand up for the values of tolerance and self-determination that lead to peace and dignity.

Now, this doesn't mean we can afford to stand still. The nature of our leadership will need to change with the times. As I said the first time I came to London as President, for the G–20 summit, the days are gone when Roosevelt and Churchill could sit in a room and solve the world's problems over a glass of brandy, although I'm sure that Prime Minister Cameron would agree that some days we could both use a stiff drink. [*Laughter*] In this century, our joint leadership will require building new partnerships, adapting to new circumstances, and remaking ourselves to meet the demands of a new era.

That begins with our economic leadership.

Adam Smith's central insight remains true today: There is no greater generator of wealth and innovation than a system of free enterprise that unleashes the full potential of individual men and women. That's what led to the Industrial Revolution that began in the factories of Manchester. That is what led to the dawn of the Information Age that arose from the office parks of Silicon Valley. That's why countries like China, India, and Brazil are growing so rapidly, because in fits and starts, they are moving toward market-based principles that the United States and the United Kingdom have always embraced.

In other words, we live in a global economy that is largely of our own making. And today, the competition for the best jobs and industries favors countries that are free thinking and forward looking, countries with the most creative and innovative and entrepreneurial citizens.

That gives nations like the United States and the United Kingdom an inherent advantage. For from Newton and Darwin to Edison and Einstein, from Alan Turing to Steve Jobs, we have led the world in our commitment to science and cutting-edge research, the discovery of new medicines and technologies. We educate our citizens and train our workers in the best colleges and universities on Earth. But to maintain this advantage in a world that's more competitive than ever, we will have to redouble our investments in science and engineering, and renew our national commitments to educating our workforces.

We've also been reminded in the last few years that markets can sometimes fail. In the last century, both our nations put in place regulatory frameworks to deal with such market failures, safeguards to protect the banking system after the Great Depression, for example, regulations that were established to prevent the pollution of our air and water during the 1970s.

But in today's economy, such threats of market failure can no longer be contained within the borders of any one country. Market failures can go global and go viral and demand international responses.

A financial crisis that began on Wall Street infected nearly every continent, which is why we must keep working through forums like the G–20 to put in place global rules of the road to prevent future excesses and abuse. No country can hide from the dangers of carbon pollution, which is why we must build on what was achieved at Copenhagen and Cancun to leave our children a planet that is safer and cleaner.

Moreover, even when the free market works as it should, both our countries recognize that no matter how responsibly we live in our lives, hard times or bad luck, a crippling illness or a layoff may strike any one of us. And so part of our common tradition has expressed itself in a conviction that every citizen deserves a basic measure of security: health care if you get sick, unemployment insurance if you lose your job, a dignified retirement after a lifetime of hard work. That commitment to our citizens has also been the reason for our leadership in the world.

And now, having come through a terrible recession, our challenge is to meet these obligations while ensuring that we're not consuming, and hence consumed, with a level of debt that could sap the strength and vitality of our economies. And that will require difficult choices and it will require different paths for both of our countries. But we have faced such challenges before and have always been able to balance the need for fiscal responsibility with the responsibilities we have to one another.

And I believe we can do this again. As we do, the successes and failures of our own past can serve as an example for emerging economies, that it's possible to grow without polluting, that lasting prosperity comes not from what a nation consumes, but from what it produces and from the investments it makes in its people and its infrastructure.

And just as we must lead on behalf of the prosperity of our citizens, so we must safeguard their security. Our two nations know what it is to confront evil in the world. Hitler's armies would not have stopped their killing had we not fought them on the beaches and on the landing grounds, in the fields and on the streets. We must never forget that there was

nothing inevitable about our victory in that terrible war. It was won through the courage and character of our people.

Precisely because we are willing to bear its burden, we know well the cost of war. And that is why we built an alliance that was strong enough to defend this continent while deterring our enemies. At its core, NATO is rooted in the simple concept of article 5: that no NATO nation will have to fend on its own, that allies will stand by one another always. And for six decades, NATO has been the most successful alliance in human history.

Today, we confront a different enemy. Terrorists have taken the lives of our citizens in New York and in London. And while Al Qaida seeks a religious war with the West, we must remember that they have killed thousands of Muslims—men, women, and children—around the globe. Our nations are not and will never be at war with Islam. Our fight is focused on defeating Al Qaida and its extremist allies. In that effort, we will not relent, as Usama bin Laden and his followers have learned. And as we fight an enemy that respects no law of war, we will continue to hold ourselves to a higher standard by living up to the values, the rule of law and due process that we so ardently defend.

For almost a decade, Afghanistan has been a central front of these efforts. Throughout those years, you, the British people, have been a stalwart ally, along with so many others who fight by our side.

Together, let us pay tribute to all of our men and women who have served and sacrificed over the last several years, for they are part of an unbroken line of heroes who have borne the heaviest burden for the freedoms that we enjoy. Because of them, we have broken the Taliban's momentum. Because of them, we have built the capacity of Afghan security forces. And because of them, we are now preparing to turn a corner in Afghanistan by transitioning to Afghan lead. And during this transition, we will pursue a lasting peace with those who break free of Al Qaida and respect the Afghan Constitution and lay down arms. And we will ensure that Afghanistan is never a safe haven for terror, but is instead a country that is strong, sovereign, and able to stand on its own two feet.

Indeed, our efforts in this young century have led us to a new concept for NATO that will give us the capabilities needed to meet new threats, threats like terrorism and piracy, cyber attacks, and ballistic missiles. But a revitalized NATO will continue to hew to that original vision of its founders, allowing us to rally collective action for the defense of our people, while building upon the broader belief of Roosevelt and Churchill that all nations have both rights and responsibilities and all nations share a common interest in an international architecture that maintains the peace.

We also share a common interest in stopping the spread of nuclear weapons. Across the globe, nations are locking down nuclear materials so they never fall into the wrong hands, because of our leadership. From North Korea to Iran, we've sent a message that those who flaunt their obligations will face consequences, which is why America and the European Union just recently strengthened our sanctions on Iran, in large part because of the leadership of the United Kingdom and the United States. And while we hold others to account, we will meet our own obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and strive for a world without nuclear weapons.

We share a common interest in resolving conflicts that prolong human suffering and threaten to tear whole regions asunder. In Sudan, after years of war and thousands of deaths, we call on both north and south to pull back from the brink of violence and choose the path of peace. And in the Middle East, we stand united in our support for a secure Israel and a sovereign Palestine.

And we share a common interest in development that advances dignity and security. To succeed, we must cast aside the impulse to look at impoverished parts of the globe as a place for charity. Instead, we should empower the same forces that have allowed our own people to thrive; we should help the hungry to feed themselves, the doctors who care for the sick. We should support countries that confront corruption and allow their people to

innovate. And we should advance the truth that nations prosper when they allow women and girls to reach their full potential.

We do these things because we believe not simply in the rights of nations, we believe in the rights of citizens. That is the beacon that guided us through our fight against fascism and our twilight struggle against communism. And today, that idea is being put to the test in the Middle East and North Africa. In country after country, people are mobilizing to free themselves from the grip of an iron fist. And while these movements for change are just 6 months old, we have seen them play out before, from Eastern Europe to the Americas, from South Africa to Southeast Asia.

History tells us that democracy is not easy. It will be years before these revolutions reach their conclusion, and there will be difficult days along the way. Power rarely gives up without a fight, particularly in places where there are divisions of tribe and divisions of sect. We also know that populism can take dangerous turns, from the extremism of those who would use democracy to deny minority rights, to the nationalism that left so many scars on this continent in the 20th century.

But make no mistake: What we saw, what we are seeing in Tehran, in Tunis, in Tahrir Square, is a longing for the same freedoms that we take for granted here at home. It was a rejection of the notion that people in certain parts of the world don't want to be free or need to have democracy imposed upon them. It was a rebuke to the worldview of Al Qaida, which smothers the rights of individuals and would thereby subject them to perpetual poverty and violence.

Let there be no doubt: The United States and United Kingdom stand squarely on the side of those who long to be free. And now we must show that we will back up those words with deeds. That means investing in the future of those nations that transition to democracy, starting with Tunisia and Egypt, by deepening ties of trade and commerce, by helping them demonstrate that freedom brings prosperity. And that means standing up for universal rights, by sanctioning those who pursue repression, strengthening civil society, supporting the rights of minorities.

We do this knowing that the West must overcome suspicion and mistrust among many in the Middle East and North Africa, a mistrust that is rooted in a difficult past. For years, we've faced charges of hypocrisy from those who do not enjoy the freedoms that they hear us espouse. And so to them, we must squarely acknowledge that, yes, we have enduring interests in the region: to fight terror, sometimes with partners who may not be perfect; to protect against disruptions of the world's energy supply. But we must also insist that we reject as false the choice between our interests and our ideals, between stability and democracy. For our idealism is rooted in the realities of history: that repression offers only the false promise of stability, that societies are more successful when their citizens are free, and that democracies are the closest allies we have.

It is that truth that guides our action in Libya. It would have been easy at the outset of the crackdown in Libya to say that none of this was our business, that a nation's sovereignty is more important than the slaughter of civilians within its borders. That argument carries weight with some. But we are different. We embrace a broader responsibility. And while we cannot stop every injustice, there are circumstances that cut through our caution, when a leader is threatening to massacre his people and the international community is calling for action. That's why we stopped a massacre in Libya. And we will not relent until the people of Libya are protected and the shadow of tyranny is lifted.

We will proceed with humility and the knowledge that we cannot dictate every outcome abroad. Ultimately, freedom must be won by the people themselves, not imposed from without. But we can and must stand with those who so struggle. Because we have always believed that the future of our children and grandchildren will be better if other people's children and grandchildren are more prosperous and more free, from the beaches of Normandy to the Balkans to Benghazi. That is our interests and our ideals. And if we fail to meet

that responsibility, who would take our place, and what kind of world would we pass on?

Our action, our leadership, is essential to the cause of human dignity. And so we must act, and lead, with confidence in our ideals and an abiding faith in the character of our people, who sent us all here today.

For there is one final quality that I believe makes the United States and the United Kingdom indispensable to this moment in history, and that is, how we define ourselves as nations.

Unlike most countries in the world, we do not define citizenship based on race or ethnicity. Being American or British is not about belonging to a certain group, it's about believing in a certain set of ideals: the rights of individuals, the rule of law. That is why we hold incredible diversity within our borders. That's why there are people around the world right now who believe that if they come to America, if they come to New York, if they come to London, if they work hard, they can pledge allegiance to our flag and call themselves Americans; if they come to England, they can make a new life for themselves and can sing "God Save the Queen" just like any other citizen.

Yes, our diversity can lead to tension. And throughout our history there have been heated debates about immigration and assimilation in both of our countries. But even as these debates can be difficult, we fundamentally recognize that our patchwork heritage is an enormous strength; that in a world which will only grow smaller and more interconnected, the example of our two nations says it is possible for people to be united by their ideals, instead of divided by their differences; that it's possible for hearts to change and old hatreds to pass; that it's possible for the sons and daughters of former colonies to sit here as Members of this great Parliament, and for the grandson of a Kenyan who served as a cook in the British Army to stand before you as President of the United States.

That is what defines us. That is why the young men and women in the streets of Damascus and Cairo still reach for the rights our citizens enjoy, even if they sometimes differ with our policies. As two of the most powerful nations in the history of the world, we must always remember that the true source of our influence hasn't just been the size of our economies or the reach of our militaries or the land that we've claimed. It has been the values that we must never waver in defending around the world, the idea that all beings are endowed by our Creator with certain rights that cannot be denied.

That is what forged our bond in the fire of war, a bond made manifest by the friendship between two of our greatest leaders. Churchill and Roosevelt had their differences. They were keen observers of each other's blind spots and shortcomings, if not always their own, and they were hardheaded about their ability to remake the world. But what joined the fates of these two men at that particular moment in history was not simply a shared interest in victory on the battlefield. It was a shared belief in the ultimate triumph of human freedom and human dignity, a conviction that we have a say in how this story ends.

This conviction lives on in their people today. The challenges we face are great. The work before us is hard. But we have come through a difficult decade, and whenever the tests and trials ahead may seem too big or too many, let us turn to their example and the words that Churchill spoke on the day that Europe was freed:

> In the long years to come, not only will the people of this island but . . . the world, wherever the bird of freedom chirps in [the] human heart, look back to what we've done, and they will say "do not despair, do not yield . . . march straight forward."

With courage and purpose, with humility and with hope, with faith in the promise of tomorrow, let us march straight forward together, enduring allies in the cause of a world that is more peaceful, more prosperous, and more just.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:47 p.m. in Westminster Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Lord Chancellor George Osborne, Speaker

of the House of Commons John Bercow, Prime Minister David Cameron, and Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom; Pope Benedict XVI; former President Nelson R. Mandela of South Africa; and Steven P. Jobs, chief executive officer, Apple Inc.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia in Deauville, France
May 26, 2011

President Obama. Let me just make a brief statement. It is good once again to see my friend and partner Dmitry Medvedev. Over the past 2 years, I think that we have built an outstanding relationship, and as a consequence, we've been able to reset relations between the United States and Russia in a way that is good for the security and the prosperity of both of our countries.

We're implementing the new START Treaty. We're cooperating on nonproliferation, on nuclear security, on intelligence and counterterrorism. We're enforcing strong sanctions on Iran. And we're cooperating on Afghanistan, where Russia has been very helpful in establishing supply lines for our troops there.

But our cooperation has extended beyond the security areas, and much of our discussion today revolved around economics. We're pleased that we've established working groups around issues of rule of law and innovation, both of which are key priorities of President Medvedev as he continues to modernize the Russian economy. And our teams have been working intensively around the issue of Russian accession to the WTO.

We think that Russian accession to the WTO will be good for the Russian economy, will be good for the U.S. economy, will be good for the world economy. And we are confident that we can get this done. And it will be a key building block in expanding trade and commerce that create jobs and benefit both countries.

We also discussed the situation in the Middle East and North Africa and shared our ideas about how we can manage the transition process that's taking place throughout the region in a way that enhances prosperity and opportunity for people there and ensures stability and resolves conflicts in a peaceful way.

And finally, we continued our discussions around the issue of missile defense. And we committed to working together so that we can find an approach and configuration that is consistent with the security needs of both countries, that maintains the strategic balance, and deals with potential threats that we both share.

We look forward to obviously additional discussions with the Russian President in the G–8 context around the world economy, world finances, issues like nuclear security. But I just want to emphasize that my interactions with President Medvedev have always been excellent. I think that he is doing fine work in moving Russia forward on a whole range of issues. And I appreciate the excellent cooperation that's been established between our governments.

And so, Dmitry, it's good to see you again. And I look forward to our work over the next day and a half.

President Medvedev. My counterpart and political partner Barack Obama has just precisely covered the issues discussed by us during the meeting, but I would like to also emphasize that I am satisfied with our personal relationship that helps us advance the relations between our two countries.

Well, over the last several years, we have done a lot to make our relations different from what they used to be, and we stand high chances to continue this positive trend and develop it further on.

But requires a lot of effort and requires continuing in the same vein, full of trust—with relations full of trust between the two Presidents. It does not mean that we have common views and coinciding views on all the issues. It's impossible, and I believe that it's not worth trying. Each and every country is sure to have its own national priorities and interests. But a lot

depends on our relations. It's about the maintaining the strategic balance of forces on our planet. We have been able to keep this balance in place, and after the new START Treaty, it has improved, I believe.

Today we talked about how to keep and further develop these achievements and how to develop our relations in, well, quite sensitive issues, including antimissile defense. I have told my counterpart Barack Obama that this issue will be finally solved in future, like, for example, in the year 2020, but we, at present, might lay foundation for other politicians' activities. And this would be a sound foundation for cooperation between our two countries in future. We will, of course, pursue this track, but political impetus are necessary.

We have talked of Middle East and North Africa. We'll continue the discussions, especially in the framework of G–20. We have dealt with settling the Iran issue. We have also talked of the necessity and we have emphasized the necessity of improving economic cooperation between our countries and stepping up Russia's WTO accession. I hope we'll be able to conclude this process finally. But we need motivation and impetus for that. And we have agreed as a result of these talks to instruct respectively our teams.

Let me once again emphasize that I'm quite happy about the way our personal relationship develops. I hope it will have a positive impact on our bilaterals. We have a lot to do together.

President Obama. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:59 p.m. at the Royal Barriere hotel. President Medvedev spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama and President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia on Counterterrorism Cooperation
May 26, 2011

When we met in June of last year, we pledged to cooperate in addressing terrorism, which has emerged as one of the greatest threats to global peace and security in the 21st century. Subsequent events, including the tragic bombing at Domodedovo Airport in January and the attempt to put bombs aboard cargo planes bound for the United States in October, underscore how important it is to strengthen our joint efforts in the struggle against this threat to the security and well-being of citizens in both our countries.

We have agreed to focus on all aspects of this challenge through cooperative actions of law enforcement, transportation security, intelligence sharing, combating terrorism finance, counterterrorism technology, and within the framework of multilateral fora such as the United Nations, Group of Eight, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and the soon-to-be established Global Counterterrorism Forum. Today, we are pleased to note several additional steps we are taking to strengthen our bilateral partnership.

Protection of the traveling public remains a key focus of our efforts. We intend to enhance our cooperation by putting in place measures to strengthen security in airports serving our two countries and enhance cooperation on other modes of transportation. We remain committed to constructively exploring additional steps we could take, both bilaterally and in multilateral fora. In particular, we intend to discuss how we can improve in-air security through the deployment of law enforcement personnel on select flights, the state-of-the-art in explosives detection measures, and how we can work together in multilateral organizations to improve global supply chain security.

We reaffirm our common view of the threat to global security posed by al Qa'ida and advocate continued cooperation to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat this terrorist organization.

There can be no justification for terrorist activities, and no terrorist should feel safe from

international efforts to bring them to justice. In this regard, the Russian Federation welcomed the decisions of the United States to separately designate Doku Umarov and his group Caucasus Emirates as Specially Designated Global Terrorists under Executive Order 13224, and to support Umarov's inclusion in the UN's Consolidated List pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1267. The United States is also announcing today that it has included Doku Umarov in its "Rewards for Justice" program, offering a reward of up to $5 million for information that leads to the location of this key terrorist leader, who has claimed responsibility, among other things, for organizing the Moscow subway bombing and the attack on rail traffic between St. Petersburg and Moscow in 2010, and the Domodedovo airport bombing this year.

We are pleased with the cooperation we have established to date in this area, but remain cognizant of the need to deepen further means to promote international security, counter violent extremism, repel terrorist threats, protect the lives and rights of citizens, and bring terrorists to justice.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama and President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia on Cooperation in the Bering Strait Region
May 26, 2011

The President of the United States of America and the President of the Russian Federation:

- Calling for protection of the shared natural and longstanding cultural heritage of Alaska and Chukotka;
- Recognizing the worldwide cultural and natural significance of the Bering Strait region, both as an ancient crossroads and as an area of present-day cooperation between our two countries;
- Noting that the Bering Strait region is important to the economies of both countries;
- Recognizing the many successes of the "Shared Beringian Heritage Program" in better understanding our shared history and sustaining the cultural vitality of the native peoples in the Central Bering Strait Region today;
- Confirming the mutual interest of both countries in deepening cooperation and strengthening ties, particularly in the region of our common boundary in the Bering Strait;
- Noting the important need to protect the rights of native peoples residing in Alaska and Chukotka, and to ensure that residents and native peoples engaged in cultural and traditional activities aimed at providing for their personal needs have continued access to natural resources in accordance with each nation's laws;
- Conscious of the importance of cooperation to protect nature and natural resources in the Bering Strait region and to apply effective strategies aimed at sustainable development of the Arctic regions of our countries;
- Understanding the significance of unique Arctic ecosystems of Alaska and Chukotka in the Bering Strait region; and
- Conscious of the effects of climate change and other pressures on the common natural and cultural heritage of the Bering Strait region;

Declare an intention to deepen cooperation between the United States of America and the Russian Federation in the cross-boundary Bering Strait region, including the expansion of interaction between the national agencies that are responsible for the specially protected natural territories/areas of both countries in the State of Alaska and the Chukotka Autonomous District, including their commitment to developing a dia-

logue with native peoples to help determine the specific goals and methods for such cooperation.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama and President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia Regarding Cooperation on Visa Issues

May 26, 2011

Last June, when we met in Washington, we expressed our determination to establish stronger bilateral ties on the basis of mutually beneficial cooperation. We are seeking to expand our economic and trade relations, and also to strengthen contacts between our citizens. As has been highlighted in many of the meetings of the Working Groups of the Presidential Commission, the current state of visa procedures between our countries does not correspond to the present level of collaboration nor to the development of bilateral relations that we hope is to come.

We continue to seek ways to facilitate travel between our countries, consistent with the laws and regulations of both countries. Over the past year, our officials have clarified the requirements for travel for purposes of tourism, work, and study, and we intend to streamline this process in order to make travel easier. As a first major step, we have instructed our officials to concentrate on visa liberalization on a reciprocal basis for the largest segments of our traveling nationals—business travelers and tourists, traveling both as individuals and in groups, and official representatives. Taking into account the significant progress achieved by our negotiators, we are working on a new agreement to issue, as a general rule without unduly formalized invitations and justifications, multiple-entry visas for eligible business travelers and tourists of 36 month validity at a unified and reciprocal fee, as well as the issuance of 12-month, multiple-entry visas for official representatives of our countries. We aim to settle these issues and sign the agreement in the very near future, consistent with domestic procedures in both countries.

As relations between our countries grow stronger, and the ties become more intense, we will seek even greater simplification and liberalization of our countries' visa systems on a reciprocal basis, aimed at providing entry of U.S. citizens into Russia and of Russian citizens into the U.S. unencumbered by unnecessary formalities, in accordance with domestic legislation of each country. We are instructing our government agencies to work in this direction.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama, President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia, and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France on the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

May 26, 2011

We, the Presidents of the OSCE Minsk Group's Co-Chair countries—France, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America—are convinced the time has arrived for all the sides to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to take a decisive step towards a peaceful settlement.

We reiterate that only a negotiated settlement can lead to peace, stability, and reconciliation, opening opportunities for regional development and cooperation. The use of force created the current situation of confrontation and instability. Its use again would only bring more suffering and devastation, and

would be condemned by the international community. We strongly urge the leaders of the sides to prepare their populations for peace, not war.

As a result of efforts by the parties and the Co-Chair countries at all levels, significant progress has been made. The latest version of the Basic Principles, as discussed in Sochi on March 5, lays a just and balanced foundation for the drafting of a comprehensive peace settlement. This document, based on the Helsinki Final Act and elements outlined in our joint declarations in L'Aquila in July 2009 and Muskoka in June 2010, provides a way for all sides to move beyond the unacceptable status quo.

We therefore call upon the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to demonstrate their political will by finalizing the Basic Principles during their upcoming summit in June. Further delay would only call into question the commitment of the sides to reach an agreement. Once an agreement has been reached, we stand ready to witness the formal acceptance of these Principles, to assist in the drafting of the peace agreement, and then to support its implementation with our international partners.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Serzh Sargsian of Armenia; and President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the Arrest of Ratko Mladic
May 26, 2011

Fifteen years ago, Ratko Mladic ordered the systematic execution of some 8,000 unarmed men and boys in Srebrenica. Today he is behind bars. I applaud President Tadic and the Government of Serbia on their determined efforts to ensure that Mladic was found and that he faces justice. We look forward to his expeditious transfer to The Hague.

Today is an important day for the families of Mladic's many victims, for Serbia, for Bosnia, for the United States, and for international justice. While we will never be able to bring back those who were murdered, Mladic will now have to answer to his victims and the world in a court of law. From Nuremberg to the present, the United States has long viewed justice for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide as both a moral imperative and an essential element of stability and peace. In Bosnia, the United States—our troops and our diplomats—led the international effort to end ethnic cleansing and bring a lasting peace. On this important day, we recommit ourselves to supporting ongoing reconciliation efforts in the Balkans and to working to prevent future atrocities. Those who have committed crimes against humanity and genocide will not escape judgment.

May the families of Mladic's victims find some solace in today's arrest, and may this deepen the ties among the people of the region.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Naoto Kan of Japan in Deauville, France
May 26, 2011

President Obama. I just want to very briefly say how glad I am to have an opportunity to discuss important issues with Prime Minister Kan once again. As I've said so often, we have one of the strongest alliances that has made both the United States and Japan safer and more prosperous for half a century now.

And obviously, all of us were heartbroken by the extraordinary devastation that took place recently as a consequence of the tsunami and

the earthquake and the nuclear crisis in Japan. I repeatedly expressed to Prime Minister Kan that the U.S. will stand by Japan for as long as it takes to help recover. And we are confident that Japan will emerge from these difficult times stronger than ever.

In the meantime, we're going to continue to work together on a whole range of international and bilateral issues. Japan has been a huge contributor to our efforts to deal with Afghanistan, to increase development there. They have been a strong supporter and contributor to Pakistan and its efforts to improve government services in that country and development in that country.

We've worked together on issues like Iran sanctions. We've worked together on a range of international development opportunities. And obviously, we continue to work together very closely in terms of security in East Asia, whether that's issues of how North Korea operates and making sure that they actually implement a denuclearization process or thinking about the long-term security structures in East Asia.

We've also had the opportunity to work together closely on trade issues, and we're both committed to making sure we're continually expanding opportunities for trade and commerce in the Asia-Pacific region.

So we have no better friend than the Japanese people. We are deeply respectful of the outstanding leadership that Prime Minister Kan has provided during a time of great crisis in his country. And we want to emphasize to the Japanese people that we will be with them throughout the rebuilding process and are very confident that Japan will continue its role as a global leader.

[*At this point, President Obama's remarks were translated into Japanese by an interpreter.*]

President Obama. Let me apologize to the translator for not breaking that up into its component parts. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Kan. This is the first opportunity to meet President Obama after the earthquake disaster, and I would like to reiterate my sincere gratitude for the United States and its support. And right after the disaster of the earthquake, we received a call from President, and since then, we have three times had a telephone conversation. Right after the disaster, the United States sent an aircraft carrier, the *Ronald Reagan,* for its activity—the U.S. and Japan's activity under Operation Tomodachi.

And as for the nuclear reactor accident, the United States provided us with the human resources and experts and also the equipment without hesitation. And through this series of actions shown by the United States, and particularly President Obama, Japan—we are—we fully and deeply recognize the depth of the *kizuna,* or the bonds of friendship, between Japan and the United States. And Japanese people are deeply grateful for what the United States has done.

As to the assistance provided from the United States, I will—Japan will definitely recover and reconstruct itself so that we will be participating, together with the United States, in various agenda in the global fora, and we would like to further increase our capability to do so, and I'm sure that we can do that.

Even since before the earthquake and the disaster, we have been working on the rebirth of Japanese economy and fiscal conservation and reform in Japan's social security and those various challenges. And the work on those agenda came to a halt right after the earthquake. But along with our efforts on reconstruction from the disaster, we will be working on those challenges which have been pointed out even since before the earthquake. And we are—[*inaudible*].

Japan has been planning its policy of the third opening of Japan after the first Meiji Restoration and the era right after the Pacific war. And the third opening was to open this country again to the world by proactively working on its economic and trade liberalization and deepening its ties with the world. And we will be working hard again on these issues.

And in our efforts to liberalize this trade liberalization, there is this issue of TPP, and our original intention was to make a decision whether we—on the negotiations of the TP—our stance on the negotiations on the

TPP in June. And that has been our policy, but there has been a delay in the schedule because of the disaster. But I would like to make the policy in the near future—not so late in the near future.

And we are fully aware of the various issues in the world such as the Middle East and North Africa and Iran and Syria and Afghanistan and Pakistan. And Japan will continue to pursue our efforts in those areas, including in our assistance to Afghanistan and Pakistan. And where we can, we will provide assistance and work—we would like to work together with the United States on these issues.

And of course, we will be working together on the issue—the situation in East Asia, which deeply relates to the security of Japan. And we have the issue of North Korea and its nuclear development, and how to stop their nuclear development is an issue, is a challenge. And also we have this issue of abduction by North Korea, and we are—we will continue to pursue its resolution with the assistance of the United States. And we will also work to ensure the denuclearization of North Korea.

In any case, we will first work on the reconstruction of the Japanese economy so that it will be revitalized again and enable us to make efforts on these issues in a proactive manner. And we have been receiving a lot of assistance from the United States, and we will continue to ask for your cooperation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at the Royal Barriere hotel. Prime Minister Kan spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Nicolas Sarkozy of France in Deauville

May 27, 2011

President Sarkozy. Ladies and gentlemen, we've just had a bilateral with the President of the United States, Barack Obama. And there's been major convergence of views on major international issues.

And I told President Obama how much—how sensitive we were to his words in his speech on the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. It was clear-sighted and bold, what he had to say on the subject.

We completely agreed with—amongst ourselves on what lessons we draw from the Arab revolutions, the Arab Springs; likewise, on Libya, where we have the same analysis. Mr. Qadhafi must leave, and Libyans are entitled to a democratic future.

And I also wish to thank President Obama for his contribution to the smooth running of this G–8 meeting and his involvement to ensure that this multilateral world of ours is run smoothly.

All of France is happy to welcome you, sir, and in particular, the people of Normandy that have certainly not forgotten all that they and we owe the Americans. For all of us French men and women, and particularly for the people of Normandy, when the President of the United States is standing on this ground, it is particularly significant, because, sadly, there are many young Americans who gave their lives for us, who rest on Normandy soil. And I think it's very important to send this message back with you home. As time passes, we have not forgotten the sacrifices you made.

So it's always very special when the President of the United States comes to this particular part of France.

President Obama. Well, it is wonderful to be back in Normandy. The last time I was here was at the invitation of the President as we were commemorating the landing at Normandy.

I want to thank President Sarkozy, I want to thank the people of Deauville and the people of France for the terrific hospitality that they've shown us over these last few days. And I want to thank President Sarkozy for the leadership that he's shown on the world stage over the last several years.

France is our oldest ally and continues to be one of our closest allies. And as President Sarkozy indicated, we had an enormous convergence of approaches and views on the challenges that we face around the world. We agreed that the changes that are taking place in the Middle East and North Africa make the pursuit of peace between Israelis and Palestinians more urgent, not less. And we agreed to coordinate closely in encouraging the parties to sit down around the negotiating table and to resolve this issue in a way that creates a Palestinian state that is sovereign and an Israeli state that is secure, the two states living side by side in peace.

We agreed that we have made progress on our Libya campaign, but that meeting the U.N. mandate of civilian protection cannot be accomplished when Qadhafi remains in Libya directing his forces in acts of aggression against the Libyan people. And we are joined in resolve to finish the job.

We discussed the enormous opportunities as well as challenges that are presented by the Arab Spring, and shortly, we'll be discussing in depth how we can fully support countries like Egypt and Tunisia, not only as they transition to democracy, but also ensuring that that democratic transition is accompanied by economic growth, which can provide more opportunities for all the people, particularly the young people, in the region.

And we also discussed a wide range of issues, from Afghanistan to Iran to the world economy, in which the interests of the United States and the interests of France are closely joined.

So the state of our alliance is strong. I am grateful for the leadership that President Sarkozy has shown. And I very much appreciate the productive way in which he's organized the G–8. I'm confident that as a consequence, we'll be able to continue to make progress in the coming months on the issues that matter most to the French people and to the American people.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. at the Royal Barriere hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. President Sarkozy spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the Situation in Belarus
May 27, 2011

I strongly condemn the conviction and sentencing of opposition Presidential candidates Vladimir Neklyaev, Andrei Sannikov, Vital Rymasheuski, Nikolai Statkevich, and Dmitry Uss in Belarus. The United States considers these candidates and the other courageous activists and candidates arrested and charged in conjunction with the crackdown on December 19 as political prisoners. In a major step backward for democracy in Belarus, their trials were clearly politically motivated and failed to meet even the most minimal standards required of a fair and independent judiciary. We welcome the broad international consensus condemning the actions of President Aleksandr Lukashenko and the Government of Belarus in this matter.

Consistent with our values and principles, the U.S. Government will pursue new sanctions against select Belarusian state-owned enterprises, in addition to the sanctions, travel restrictions, and asset freezes announced on January 31. These measures are targeted against those responsible for the repression, particularly President Lukashenko, and are not directed against the people of Belarus. We are coordinating with other concerned governments to ensure that, through the implementation of a flexible international sanctions regime, we hold accountable those Belarusian officials responsible for these repressive actions. We have also increased our assistance in support of democratic reform in Belarus. We join the European Union and our other allies and partners in supporting the aspirations of the people of Belarus for a modern, democratic, and prosperous society within Europe.

Letter to Members of Congress on the Visa Waiver Program and United States Visa Policy With Regard to Poland
May 27, 2011

Dear _____:

Thank you for your letter regarding my visit to Poland and your recent introduction of the Secure Travel and Counterterrorism Partnership Program Act of 2011 (S. 497/H.R. 959) to restructure the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).

I write to express my strong support for the Secure Travel and Counterterrorism Partnership Program Act of 2011. I share your view that our counterterrorism and security partnerships have evolved and it makes sense to pursue a restructuring of the program. Countries that are willing to cooperate with the United States on our global priorities, including on counterterrorism initiatives, information sharing, and prevention of terrorist travel, deserve the opportunity to become part of our VWP.

I also share your support for Poland and disappointment that this close NATO ally has been excluded from the VWP to date. Poland's strong and steadfast support during our missions in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrates the deep alliance we have forged and the close partnership between our two countries.

It is my hope that my trip to Poland will help to strengthen the enduring bonds between the American and Polish people. Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue of interest to both countries.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Sens. Mark S. Kirk and Barbara A. Mikulski; and Reps. Brian Higgins, Daniel Lipinski, Mike Quigley, and Janice D. Schakowsky. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 28.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Bronislaw Komorowski of Poland in Warsaw, Poland
May 28, 2011

President Komorowski. Mr. President, I would like to express my satisfaction and my gratitude because of your presence at our summit of Central and Eastern European states. It was an important event for the leaders of my region of Europe—our region of Europe.

Your words were also very important, when you said that in the process of European integration, you can see an opportunity to reinforce the world of Western values. Other words were also very important: the words about keeping up an open character of both NATO and the European Union. I know that these words go very deeply to the hearts and minds of many of the leaders of this part of Europe.

This part of Europe has its successes; it also has its problems. And I am very glad that there was also a meeting directly between you and the President of Ukraine. I would like Ukraine to be a country which consistently, perhaps not very spectacularly, but still consistently striving at deepening its relations with the Western world.

I am very happy that we could exchange our opinions about the engagement in the construction of democracy in the environment of Europe, both to the east, for example, in Belarus, where there was a dramatic collapse of democratic processes. So we are having to deal with the arrests and convictions of the combatants—[*inaudible*]—the opposition to the current Presidential elections, and there is also the harassment of the correspondent of the Polish press in Belarus. I'm also very glad that our views are absolutely identical as far as very firm presentation of problems of civil and human rights in Belarus.

I also would like to point out very clearly the issues connected to the security—for the security policy. And with satisfaction, I would like to note that the arrangements that were made in Lisbon are fully reflected in that practice of political actions taken up by the United States and NATO as a whole.

I mean here, first of all, the prospect of NATO missile defense program, which will take into account the possibility of cooperation with Russia, but it will continue to be an element or the tool of the alliance that will also be capable of performing tasks connected to article 5 of the Washington treaty.

President Obama. Let me once again thank President Komorowski for his wonderful hospitality, and to the Polish people, thank you for the warmth and generosity with which you've greeted me.

Yesterday was a excellent day. I was glad to be able to commemorate the extraordinary sacrifices of the Polish men and women in uniform, to meet some of the veterans from previous wars, to go to the memorial of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, which was extraordinarily moving, and to meet some of the survivors of that period, and to see the enormous investment that the city of Warsaw and the Polish people have made in remembrance that, I think, will end up being a site that is important not only for Polish history, but will end up being an attraction for people from around the world who need to know the history of that period and before.

The dinner last night I thought was excellent. It was a good, frank conversation with leaders from throughout the region. As the President indicated, what I emphasized was that a strong, integrated Europe is very much in the security and economic interests of the United States. And we want to encourage that process as much as we can.

We want to make sure that NATO and EU membership remain open. We think that's important. We think that Poland, because of its extraordinary success, both as a democracy and as a market-based economy, is a model and example for the region. And this incredible transformation that's taken place over the last 25 years here in Poland is now making it a leader in Europe, as we look forward to an EU Presidency for Poland, that's an example of the leadership that it's taking, but also as countries like Ukraine look to Poland, and Poland, I think, exerts a very helpful influence in showing a pathway for modernization and democratic reform.

In our meetings today, as the President noted, a country like Belarus is backsliding, and it's important that we work together, as we've already committed to doing, to encouraging civil society, encouraging reformist trends within Belarus. The kind of repressive actions that we've seen in Belarus can end up having a negative impact over the region as a whole, and that makes us less safe and makes us less secure.

We had an extensive discussion about our respective relationships with Russia. I'm very proud of the reset process that has helped to stabilize relations between the United States and Russia, and President Medvedev, I think, has been an important partner in this process.

As I indicated at the Lisbon summit and I reiterated over the last 2 days, we believe that missile defense is something where we should be cooperating with the Russians because we share external threats, and this would not be a threat to the strategic balance that Russia is concerned with. But as you just heard from the President, we think it's very important that NATO remains in charge of NATO defense capabilities. That's one of the central principles of NATO.

We also discussed how we can strengthen Polish and American commercial ties, and President Komorowski presented some interesting ideas that we will be pursuing on that front. We discussed how we can more regularize the visa process between our two countries, and I indicated to him the work that we are doing in the United States to be able to achieve that.

And we also discussed NATO operations both in Afghanistan as well as in Libya. And I want to again thank the Polish people and the Polish armed forces for consistently meeting their responsibilities.

In sum, I think the relationship between our two countries has never been stronger. I am very proud to come here in order to say thank you to the Polish people for their friendship and to assure them that there are millions of Americans who understand that Poland is one of our closest and strongest allies.

We congratulate Poland for its extraordinary successes under your leadership, Mr. President. And we trust that the next 25 years are going to be bringing as much extraordinary progress to this great country as the previous 25 and, again, thank Poland for the leadership it's taking not just in the region, but around the world when it comes to promoting democracy not just through word, but also by example.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:52 a.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia. President Komorowski referred to President Viktor Yanukovych of Ukraine; and journalist Andrzej Poczobut, who faces criminal charges in Belarus for criticism of President Aleksandr Lukashenko of Belarus. President Komorowski spoke in Polish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks During a Discussion on Democracy and Development in Warsaw
May 28, 2011

President Bronislaw Komorowski of Poland. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, I think we feel it all too well that it's worth having dreams, but dreams come true when, apart from dreams, we have courage and determination to pursue such goals as freedom and democracy.

Mr. President, today in this room you are meeting the Polish democracy. These are those who fought for the Polish freedom and for the democratic state, and they fought well. Those are the people who fought in the anti-Communist position; those are the people of Solidarity. And here in this room, you also see those who have come here to meet you, and those are the protectioners of today's democracy. Those are the ones who will take part in the—today's processes of democratization. Here we see the representatives of the—both Chambers of the Parliament. There are Ministers; there are also representatives of the major political forces in Poland—in our democratic Poland.

I also would like to indicate that that part of the Polish democracy, which is not directly involved with politics, but they cocreate Polish democracy, those are nongovernmental organizations, as they are watchdogs; they, in fact, incentivize us as to take due care of democracy as our constant challenge and our constant commitment, and to also be in touch with the society.

Also there is the former Prime Minister, Mazowiecki, together with us, and he is the person who would like to talk with you about our Polish experience in transformation; that is, when we were passing away from the Communist regime and getting onto a democratic society.

And once again, I would ask to speak Mr. President first and then the former Prime Minister.

President Obama. Well, thank you very much, Mr. President, and thank you for the great honor of appearing with all of you. I want to express my thanks to everyone who is here today to share with me their experiences and expertise in democracy-building. I look forward to listening and learning from Poland's esteemed democracy leaders and younger activists.

I have to say that it is especially a treat for me to be able to see so many of you who inspired us in America when the Solidarity movement first appeared. I was still a relatively young man. I have a lot of gray hair now, but at the time I was still studying. And I remember at that time understanding that history was being made because ordinary people were standing up and doing extraordinary things with great courage and a great—against great odds.

And the Solidarity leaders and others in this room launched a peaceful revolution that eventually led to a regime's collapse and the

downfall of a broader system of Soviet repression. And that's had ripple effects and ramifications around the world, not just in Central and Eastern Europe.

Your actions charted a course for freedom that inspired many on this continent and beyond. And it has many relevant lessons, so we want to encourage all states undergoing similar experiences to learn from Poland. We all know that in the aftermath of the overthrow of a repressive regime, emotions run high. But new democratic governments have to show themselves to be able to channel that energy in constructive ways, to hold themselves to higher standards than their authoritarian predecessors in being inclusive, respecting the rule of law, respecting minority rights, believing in freedom of expression even when we don't agree with what's being expressed. And so I think that Poland has navigated that process as well as any country in recent history.

I very much value the contributions that Poland is making in Tunisia. I appreciate the fact that your Foreign Minister has now visited Benghazi.

So again, let me thank everybody in this room, but the people of Poland, for being an inspiration to change around the world. And I'm very much looking forward to hearing some of the observations that those who've fought long and hard for democracy may have as we face similarly transformative moments around the world.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Foreign Affairs Minister Radoslaw Sikorski of Poland. President Komorowski referred to former Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki of Poland. President Komorowski spoke in Polish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Donald Tusk of Poland in Warsaw
May 28, 2011

Prime Minister Tusk. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, before the visit of President Barack Obama, I learned that Ralph Waldo Emerson was your favorite American thinker. And certainly at the time I tried to search for some association, some quotations, some connections. And out of all these ideas, the one that talks about enthusiasm—that nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm—it seems to be especially fit for our way of understanding the world.

When I was thinking about our understanding of the world, I'm thinking about both of us as people, but first of all, about our nations and about our states. I want to tell you that Poland today is the place where we have lots of enthusiasm. We have gone through the previous years, the difficult, critical years, also in the global dimension, with a faith in our own power, our strength. And it's faith and enthusiasm that allow us to overcome the difficulties. It is also the effect of our cooperation.

You Americans have invested in Poland. But you have invested also in the whole region and with lots of your enthusiasm. Some money too; some other types of assistance habitually works. But just as enthusiasm was needed to create the great Solidarity movement in Poland, it was also needed when, except for enthusiasm and freedom, we had nothing else in 1989. But people with the enthusiasm and freedom are enough when you have friends. You have invested in the region, and it works.

We talked, amongst others, about Enterprise Fund that brought so good results in Poland. But that investment was actually the investment in freedom and the related prosperity for 100 million people, because today we are speaking about Eastern Partnership, we are speaking about our cooperation that could help those nations and those people in the region that are waiting for their chance, their opportunity, and their freedom.

Mr. President, I want to say what we say in Poland quite often: It works. When friends are ready to help, when people have enthusiasm, and when there is freedom, then it really works.

And the fact that Poland today can speak with so much pride about ourselves on the eve of the Presidency in the European Union, that we were also able to show to Europe how to manage, how to operate also under the conditions of the financial crisis, it was possible, amongst others, thanks to the fact that we together have invested in our future with so much of American and Polish enthusiasm.

I want to tell you—and this is what we declared during our conversation—that our experience, the certainty that it worked, can be translated, and we can translate this. And we do this when we think about those nations whose leaders you met yesterday, but also those who are waiting for freedom and democracy for even longer. I am speaking here about the region of North Africa and some of the countries of the Middle East.

So I'm really very happy that together we were able to accept this ambitious project so that the experience resulting from Enterprise Fund and other experiences that Poles and Americans could implement together give to those who are waiting for such assistance.

I also would like to thank you very much for understanding and your kind approach to the idea of another stage of this cooperation, which is an innovation fund. And this is the idea which came into being during our conversation. Both of us think that there will be the follow-up of this innovation fund, which here in Poland will also give the results in the form of the modernity, new technologies, and human intellectual capital.

We have been already operating in this area. We have been spending dozens of millions zlotys for education of the most skillful managers at American universities, people of technical skills, engineers. And I think that it will also bring results for the future.

We have reconfirmed our solidarity also in the context of our joint operations in the most difficult places of the world. We spoke about Afghanistan. For Polish security, it is important that the memorandum on the presence of the American air detachment in Poland systematically, gradually is becoming a fact of life, and I would like to thank you very much for your readiness to finalize the project.

And shale gas, well, for obvious reason, it was an—a subject of important talks—and nuclear power. We agreed with President Obama that these undertakings, it's really an excellent area for Polish-American cooperation. And I am sure that it will bring good results. To the Polish people, American people, it will be both joint business and joint common energy security. And it will also be of use to a united Europe, this cooperation that will also give to Europe more stability in terms of energy.

I would like to thank you once again, Mr. President, and, well, your visit has another help because your enthusiasm and your ability in the future is proverbial in the world, and we feel in Poland that you are one of us, thanks to the fact that we believe very strongly in our own strength and our future.

Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister. Once again, I just want to thank you and the people of Poland for the extraordinary welcome that I've received since I arrived. And I have to tell you that my wife Michelle and the girls very much want to come back, because I've told them on the phone what a extraordinary country this is.

And you're right, in some ways I am part of Poland because I come from Chicago, and if you live in Chicago and you haven't become a little bit Polish, then something's wrong with you.

You know, Poland is one of our strongest and closest allies in the world and is a leader in Europe. And I believe that Poland's story demonstrates how a proud and determined and enthusiastic people can overcome extraordinary challenges and build a democracy that represents the great strength and character of this nation, while now serving as an example for Europe and the world.

During our conversations, we reaffirmed the strength of our alliance. Our alliance is rooted

in shared history, shared values, deep ties among our people. Our alliance is cemented through NATO and the ironclad commitment that article 5 of NATO represents.

Of course, our alliance is also rooted in shared interests, and we, during our lunch, reviewed a wide range of issues. I wanted to congratulate Poland on behalf of the United States for reaching the incredible milestone of assuming the Presidency of the European Union. This is Poland's first opportunity to take on this leadership role since joining the EU, and it speaks to the incredible progress that Poland has made both politically and economically during this period of time. And we look forward to working closely with Poland as it assumes these new responsibilities.

Along those lines, we are interested and excited about Poland's plans for the Eastern Partnership as a priority of its EU Presidency. And I understand that it will host a summit this fall to raise awareness and support for Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. And the dinner that I had yesterday was an indication of Poland's leadership in helping to shape a vision for the region that continues down a path that offers more opportunity and more prosperity to people. And obviously, one of the important roles that Poland can play is not just as a promoter of ideas, but as a living example of what is possible when countries take reform seriously.

We're also aiming to expand our bilateral economic relationship with Poland, as the Prime Minister mentioned. Poland's economy was the only economy in the EU not to fall into recession during the economic crisis and has enormous potential for economic growth. So far, we'll—as a consequence, this fall we will hold a high-level U.S.-Poland business roundtable, which brings together private and public sector leaders to identify and promote new opportunities to boost economic growth. And the idea that was raised by the Prime Minister about a potential innovation fund that is a part of this fall summit I think is an excellent idea, and so we're going to pursue that actively.

We also discussed the potential for us to cooperate on a wide range of clean energy initiatives, including how we can, in an environmentally sound way, develop natural gas in both the United States and Poland and how we can cooperate on the technology and science around that.

The United States is also fully committed to supporting safe nuclear power generation in Poland, and we're prepared to offer our expertise of the largest and safest nuclear power industry in the world.

And finally, we discussed the issue of how jointly we can promote democracy. The session that I had this morning with democracy promotion experts, including many of the founders of Solidarity, who recently traveled to Tunisia to share their advice and assistance, is just a symbol of why Poland is so important. It has gone through what many countries want to now go through and has done so successfully. And so the United States wants to work with Poland, and we welcome their leadership in reaching out to North Africa and the Middle East.

At the same time, as Prime Minister Tusk mentioned, here in this neighborhood, we still have challenges. We discussed in particular the unacceptable situation in Belarus. President Lukashenko has shown a total disregard for democratic values, the rule of law, and the human rights of his own people. And his brutal crackdown included the conviction and sentencing of Presidential candidates who challenged him in the Presidential election and the repression and imprisonment of members of the free press, including one of the Polish press.

So since this crackdown has begun, Poland and the United States have coordinated closely on Belarus, both bilaterally and through the EU. We appreciate Poland's leadership on this issue, including the strong support of Belarusian civil society and the generosity to its people. We are looking forward to strong cooperation on this front.

Last point I guess I will make, we discussed our respective relationships with Russia. And I am a strong believer that the reset between the United States and Russia has benefited this region, as well as the United States and Russia, because it's reduced tensions and has, I think,

facilitated genuine dialogue about how each country can move forward.

We very much appreciate Poland's pragmatic approach to their relationship with Russia. I applaud the Prime Minister for his determination to continue these efforts, even if it is not always the most politically popular thing to do.

We both believe that we cannot compromise on our most cherished principles and ideals, but we should also seek to cooperate where we can, for example, in areas like counterterrorism, counternarcotics, the spread of nuclear weapons and materials, and the support of our joint operations in Afghanistan.

So this has been an excellent visit. It's fitting that I conclude my trip here in Poland. At each stop, I've affirmed the fact that America's transatlantic alliance is the cornerstone of our engagement in the world. It's indispensable to the peace and prosperity of the world. It helps to uphold the principles of rule of law and individual liberty around the world. And I think that Poland is a leader on all these issues.

So congratulations, Mr. Prime Minister, for your outstanding leadership. And to the Polish people, thank you so much for your incredible hospitality.

Thank you. Thank you, sir.

Moderator. Thank you very much. And now I would like to ask—[*inaudible*]—from the Polish Press Agency.

Visa Waiver Program/Energy/Belarus

Q. Good afternoon. We know that the American administration plans to liberalize the visa system for the Polish people. What are the ideas? When can they come into force? In other words, when people of Poland will be able to do shopping at Fifth Avenue in London—in New York, certainly?

And the second question is, how do you see the cooperation in the area of energy security between Poland and America, and between America and the European Union? And my third, last question is, did you talk about political repressions in Belarus, amongst others, the arrest of a journalist of Gazeta Wyborcza, our daily, Andrzej Poczobut?

President Obama. Well, I'm going to try to remember all those questions. [*Laughter*]

With respect to the visa issue, this is a topic that was brought up by your President when he visited the White House. And I promised at that time that we would begin to try to find a solution.

The problem has to do with the existing law that had a very specific criteria for who gets the waiver visa system, and that criteria was based on the rejection rate of visas. Poland didn't qualify under that law, and I can't—I could not simply waive the law. But what I've now done is put my support behind legislation in Congress that would change the criteria so that we're looking at the overstay rate of visas, and our expectation is, is that by this change in the law, we can be in a position to resolve this issue in a way that is satisfactory to Poland, but also meets the security concerns of the United States.

We very much want you to shop on Fifth Avenue and anywhere else in the United States. [*Laughter*]

With respect to—see, I've already forgotten the other questions. [*Laughter*] There was Belarus, energy——

Q. [*Inaudible*]

President Obama. As I mentioned earlier, we had an extensive discussion about both shale gas and nuclear power. I think Prime Minister Tusk and I both believe that it is important for us to diversify our energy sources. The United States doesn't want to be energy independent on anybody, and Poland doesn't want to be energy dependent on anybody. And what that means is, is that there have to be a broad set of energy approaches.

Shale gas is an important opportunity; it has to be developed in a environmentally secure and sensitive way. We believe that there is the capacity technologically to extract that gas in a way that is entirely safe, and what we want to do is to be able to share our expertise and technology with Poland in a fully transparent and accountable way, because we think that consumers, environmentalists, everybody should be able to look at the data and say this is something that can actually work.

With respect to nuclear power, similarly, we have to do it in a way that is safe and secure. Obviously, all of us are mindful of what happened in Japan. And we have a great track record and enormous expertise in the United States of developing nuclear power in a way that is safe and secure. And we are happy to consult with the Polish Government and have our companies consult with the Polish Government in terms of how to approach that.

That does not eliminate the need for us in both countries and all around the world to continue to develop other clean energy sources like solar, like wind, biomass. And we are putting a lot of basic research dollars into this clean energy space because we think it's going to be important not only for our individual countries, but for dealing with greenhouse gases and climate change.

And the final point, with respect to Belarus, we had, as I indicated, a very extensive conversation. I am familiar with the case of the journalist that you just mentioned, and we agreed that we have to apply as much pressure as we can on Belarus to change its practices. And that's going to require close coordination between the United States and Poland, but also between the United States and all of Europe. And I think Poland is uniquely situated during its Presidency to be able to show extraordinary leadership on this issue.

Prime Minister Tusk. One sentence only for me to refer to the three issues raised by you. As far as the last one is concerned, I stated with satisfaction that our views are 100 percent aligned. There is no future for such dictatorships as the one which is represented today by Lukashenko in Belarus.

Both the United States and Poland will be ambitiously setting forth a trail or just the road for conduct for the international community so that the Belarusian people did not have to pay too high a price and for too long a period. I also informed President Obama and—about our interpretation of the events in the Belarusian economy.

Talking about the victims of the regime, including our journalists—whether your journalists or our journalists and your colleague, Mr. Poczobut—already President Komorowski and myself too both informed President Obama about this particularly Polish problem.

Talking about visa waiver and Fifth Avenue, what is and what should be important in Poland is that more and more Polish people make enough money to be able to afford shopping on Fifth Avenue. And that means that it is in the interest of the United States to make sure that as many Polish people as possible could get not just the shops on Fifth Avenue, but all over the United States in the easiest possible way. Because this is the business for both parties.

I want to already say, Mr. President, that there are many other places in the world where you can buy things and where you can spend your money, so I'm really very glad that there are very clear signs and your personal engagement, Mr. President, in this, and this will most probably also let American people to make more money on Polish tourists and Polish buyers.

Talking about energy security, this is a breakthrough moment. And I'm not talking about our conversation here, but it is simply that reconfirmation of the fact that we are approaching, or that we are participants of the energetic breakthrough. It's not really joking anymore or kidding. We are speaking about technological cooperation. We are talking about joint investments. And we are talking about political cooperation of the two nations, out of which one is an absolute leader in the area of technology, and the other one, Poland, turned out to be one of the leaders in terms of deposits, resources.

That is why it was with a great satisfaction that I received the words of the United States that in the United States, well, people think very seriously about cooperation. We want to combine our ideas about innovative cooperation and technological cooperation with the sectors that will be cooperating in real terms with each other. It's mainly about power sector.

And we also want to reconfirm the full will of the Polish party to be fully open in the area of nuclear power. American people will be a very valuable partner to us as a country, which is really experienced and with good will.

White House Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney. For the American press corps, Scott Horsley of National Public Radio.

Role of North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Poland's Security/Missile Defense System

Q. Thank you. Mr. Prime Minister, can you tell me if Poland today feels reassured about the U.S. commitment to Poland's security and if, coming into this meeting, you felt that reassurance was required?

And, Mr. President, you've talked a lot this week about inspiration: inspiration in Northern Ireland for the Middle East peace process, inspiration in Eastern Europe for the Arab Spring. I wonder if you take home with you also some cautionary lessons about the challenges in the experience here and in Northern Ireland and what you can do as President to maintain that Emersonian enthusiasm at a time of fiscal austerity in the U.S. and Europe?

Prime Minister Tusk. Well, these were my first words during the meeting with President Obama. I spoke about the security of Poland. The security of Poland has different dimensions. People every day feel safer and more secure if they do not have to pay too high prices. This dimension of security will be achieved by us when we have energy independence and when both of us act effectively for stability and peace in different regions of the world.

Risk, danger, high living costs—they are born where conflicts are born, while speculation feeds on unrest and war. And that's why this dimension of security of both Poland and the United States requires our cooperation so that we could stabilize the situation in the world, especially in the regions which are really very much suffering from the conflicts.

Talking about the direct security of Poland, I have to tell you that it is a very important sign for us to reach an agreement which will be finalized by the signing of the memorandum of understanding, the memorandum that in the future will mean the presence of American troops on the Polish soil. The order of magnitude is not really large, but the gesture is very significant.

Secondly, we spoke about the future of the installation, the so-called missile defense. The product of President Obama informed also public opinion in—well, in Poland long time ago. And I want to stress very strongly that the words that I heard from him today give us this sense that together we work also for the sake—for the purpose of Polish security. These words, that NATO is to defend NATO, these words are very much binding, binding for all the members of NATO. And I also wanted to thank for these words.

Definitely after this meeting, with our—with absolutely pure conscience, I can tell you that our cooperation with the United States, both bilaterally and within NATO, leads to the fact that every year, Poland becomes a country which is more and more secure. And our political cooperation, as was mentioned by President Obama, leads to the point when, perhaps, never in the future we will have to use arms in this part of Europe.

Both of us focused very much on political methods of conflict resolution and solving threats, and I believe that this is the best way to guarantee security to Poland. But you know, you have to be cautious, and you have to be ensured. That is why we always speak also about the military aspects of security.

President Obama. Just a point about security. As I said, Poland is one of our closest and strongest allies. That's been demonstrated time and again. Really what we did here today was simply to reconfirm what Prime Minister Tusk and I have discussed before, which is that NATO is the strongest alliance in history, primarily because it has a very simple principle, and that is, we defend each other. That's what article 5 is all about.

And when I came into office, I indicated to all the NATO members that there's no such thing as a new NATO member or an old NATO member, there are just NATO members. And everybody is the same, and everybody has the same rights and the same responsibilities. And as a consequence, one of the things that I initiated was making sure that we have actual contingency plans for each country, including those in Eastern Europe and Central

Europe that obviously are coming out of a fairly recent and difficult history of security issues.

Now, as Prime Minister mentioned, that evolution of our security relationship continues to evolve. The aviation detachment that is being finalized will be significant, and we're proud that we've gotten that completed. Our missile defense plans that we have laid out that involve Poland will allow us to deal with shared threats. And what we want to do is to create an environment in this region in which peace and security are a given. That's not just good for this region, it is good for the United States of America. And we will always be there for Poland.

Now, I wasn't sure, because it was such a clever question, what exactly cautionary notes you wanted me to address. Were you referring to cautionary notes about what's happening around the world? Were you talking about cautionary notes and any reflections I have about what's taking place back home? So I want to make sure I answer your question.

U.S. Foreign Policy/U.S. Role in Promoting Democracy and Development

Q. The endpoint in Northern Ireland—I said the endpoint in Northern Ireland and Eastern Europe is a happy endpoint, but in terms of the process, the length of time, the obstacles, the challenges, the patience that was required, if there's something you learned on this trip that you take home that maybe gives you some thoughts about how you will approach that as President and maintain the interest in a country where our attention spans are short and our resources are limited.

President Obama. I think it's an excellent question, and this has been something that I've been reflecting on throughout this trip.

Keep in mind what the purpose of this trip was from my perspective. In addition to reestablishing a wonderful conversation with strong friends and allies, I wanted to make sure that everybody in our country, but everybody around the world, understands that the transatlantic alliance remains a cornerstone, a foundation stone for American security.

We share ideals, we share values, and we have taken on consistently leadership on some of the toughest challenges that face the world. And part of that leadership has always been the promotion of freedom and democracy in different regions.

I was struck by something that the president of the Senate—or the head of the Senate here in Poland mentioned during our democracy forum, that he had lived through three waves of revolutionary transformation in his lifetime. He saw the shift from military rule to democracy in Latin America. He saw those changes then take place with incredible speed when the Berlin Wall came down and the Iron Curtain was pulled asunder. And now he's seeing what's happening in North Africa and the Middle East.

And in each of these cases, what you have is a process that's not always smooth. There are going to be twists and turns. There are going to be occasions where you take one step forward and two steps back; sometimes, you take two steps forward and one step back.

What's required, I think, is, number one, understanding that you have to institutionalize this transformation. It's not enough just to have the energy, the initial thrust of those young people in Tahrir Square or the initial enthusiasm of the Solidarity movement. That then has to be institutionalized, and the habits of countries have to change.

It's not sufficient just to have elections. You then also have to have a process to establish rule of law and the respect of the rights of minorities and a constant vigilance when it comes to do with freedom of the press and freedom of speech and freedom of religion. And you have to then broker a whole set of potential ethnic conflicts that may arise, and sometimes those may flair into violence.

So part of the lesson is that you have to institutionalize change. And that is a hard process, and it's a long process.

Number two is that countries on the outside cannot impose this change, but we can really help. We can facilitate. We can make a difference. And the testimony of, I think, the people that I've spoken to here in Poland—as is true when I had conversations about the resolution of the Northern Ireland conflict—was that

American participation, American facilitation of dialogue, our investment in civil society, our willingness to do business, our openness to ultimate membership in international institutions like NATO, all those things made a difference. It solidifies, it fortifies people's impulse that change is possible.

And so to the American people, even at a time when we have fiscal constraints, even at a time where I spend most of my day thinking about our economy and how to put folks back to work and how to make sure that we're reducing gas prices and how we stabilize the housing market and how we innovate and adapt and change so that we are fully competitive in the 21st century and maintain our economic leadership, I want the American people to understand we've got to leave room for us to continue our tradition of providing leadership when it comes to freedom, democracy, human rights.

And in the dinner last night, I thought something very interesting was said. These are Central European leaders and Presidents from all across the region. One of them said: "There were those who said we could not handle democracy, that our cultures were too different. But America had faith in us. And so now we want to join with America and have faith in those in the Middle East and in North Africa. Even if some don't think that they can handle democracy or that their cultures are too different, our experience tells us something different."

And I think that's a good lesson for all of us to remember. And I think that Poland can play an extraordinary role precisely because they have traveled so far, so rapidly, over the last 25 years.

We're looking forward to being a strong partner with them because when we work together, that's a force multiplier. The more we have strong leaders like Poland working alongside us, the more successful we can be in dealing with North Africa and the Middle East and encouraging the best impulses in that region. And that's going to be good for all of our security.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:30 p.m. at the Chancellery Building. In his remarks, the President referred to President Aleksandr Lukashenko and opposition Presidential candidates Vladimir Neklyaev, Andrei Sannikov, Vital Rymasheuski, Nikolai Statkevich, and Dmitry Uss of Belarus; and President Bronislaw Komorowski and Speaker of the Senate Bogdan Borusewicz of Poland. Prime Minister Tusk, a moderator, and a reporter spoke in Polish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Following a Tour of Tornado Damage in Joplin, Missouri
May 29, 2011

The President. Obviously, the scene speaks for itself. When we were in Tuscaloosa a few weeks ago, I talked about how I had not seen devastation like that in my lifetime. You come here to Joplin, and it is just as heartbreaking and in some ways even more devastating.

I want to thank the outstanding work that Governor Nixon, the mayor, all the congressional delegation, as well as the first lady have done—and the Red Cross—in helping people to respond. But obviously, it is going to take years to build back. And we mourn the loss of life. We're going to be going to a memorial service and try to help comfort the families and let them know that we're praying for them and thinking about them.

We had a chance to meet some of the folks who lived in this community, and just harrowing stories, but also miraculous stories. Met an 85-year-old gentleman who has a—still has a lawn service, who explained how he had just gotten his chicken potpie out, and the storm started coming, and he went into the closet and came out without a scratch. And so there are good stories to tell and happy stories to tell here, but obviously, there's been a lot of hardship as well.

The main thing I just want to communicate to the people of Joplin is, this is just not your

tragedy. This is a national tragedy, and that means there will be a national response. Craig Fugate, who's probably been the busiest man in the Federal Government over this last few months, has been on the ground since just the day after this happened. And he's helping to coordinate with an outstanding team of State and local officials. We're going to do everything we can to continue whatever search and rescue remains. We are doing everything we can to make sure that folks get the shelter that they need, the support that they need.

We're working with the Governor to make sure that we cut through any redtape that's necessary with respect to rebuilding here. And then we're just going to have a tough, long slog. But what I've been telling every family that I've met here is, we're going to be here long after the cameras leave; we are not going to stop until Joplin's fully back on its feet.

So to all the volunteers who are helping out—one of the things that's been incredible is to see how many people from out of State have driven from as far away as Texas, nearby Illinois, people just coming here to volunteer, firefighters, ordinary citizens. It's an example of what the American spirit's all about. And that gives us a lot of encouragement at a time when obviously people are going through a lot of hardship.

So thank you again, Governor——

Governor Jeremiah W. "Jay" Nixon of Missouri. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. ——for the great work. Would you like to say a few words?

Gov. Nixon. Just that we've been out—I've been here every day, trying to work early to late, trying to back up the local officials—what they needed—try to coordinate the Federal response, try to make sure we green-light the necessity to move forward.

Today is a day of remembrance, as we move here to the memorial service. The loss not only of life, not only of injuries, property, are significant. It's going to take a higher power to keep the strength of this community resolved to get this done. And we're confident that it will happen.

We're especially appreciative, Mr. President, you focusing your attention right here, the entire world's attention right here, to help us in ways that will make a lasting difference to this community. God bless you, my friend.

The President. Thank you.

And one last point I want to make. Obviously, in the rebuilding process, there are a lot of families who are thankful that they're okay, but they've been displaced. It's not just their homes: Many of them lost any means of transportation; the school's been destroyed. And so for all Americans to take a little bit of time out and make a contribution to the American Red Cross or other charitable organizations that are active here in Joplin, that can make an enormous difference. Even if it's just $5, $10, whatever you've got to spare. Because one of the things that's striking about this, and I felt the same way when I was down in Alabama: This can happen to anybody. The difference between you being in the path of this twister, and a few blocks away, you being okay, is a very slim, slim margin. And so we've all got to put together because here but for the grace of God go I.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:16 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Michael Woolston of Joplin, MO; Georganne W. Nixon, wife of Gov. Nixon; Joplin resident Hugh Hills; and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for the Victims of the Tornado in Joplin
May 29, 2011

The President. Thank you so much. Please, please be seated.

Audience member. I love you, Obama!

The President. Oh, I love Joplin!

Audience member. We love you more!

The President. I love Joplin.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. We love Joplin.

Thank you, Governor, for that powerful message, but more importantly, for being here with and for your people every step of the way.

We are grateful to you, to Reverend Gariss. Father Monaghan, I'm so glad you got in that tub. [*Laughter*] To Reverend Brown for that incredibly powerful message.

To Senator Claire McCaskill, who's been here, and Congressman Billy Long; Mayor Woolston; to Craig Fugate—it doesn't get a lot of attention, but he heads up FEMA, our emergency response at the Federal level. He's been going from Tuscaloosa to Joplin and everywhere in between tirelessly doing outstanding work. We're grateful for him. Gail McGovern, the president of the national Red Cross, which has contributed mightily to the rebuilding efforts here.

Most of all, to the family and friends of all those who've been lost and all those who've been affected.

Today we gather to celebrate the lives of those we've lost to the storms here in Joplin and across the Midwest, to keep in our prayers those still missing, to mourn with their families, to stand together during this time of pain and trial.

And as Reverend Brown alluded to, the question that weighs on us at a time like this is, why? Why our town? Why our home? Why my son or husband or wife or sister or friend? Why?

We do not have the capacity to answer. We can't know when a terrible storm will strike or where or the severity of the devastation that it may cause. We can't know why we're tested with the loss of a loved one or the loss of a home where we've lived a lifetime.

These things are beyond our power to control. But that does not mean we are powerless in the face of adversity. How we respond when the storm strikes is up to us. How we live in the aftermath of tragedy and heartache, that's within our control. And it's in these moments, through our actions, that we often see the glimpse of what makes life worth living in the first place.

In the last week, that's what Joplin has not just taught Missouri, not just taught America, but has taught the world. I was overseas in the aftermath of the storm and had world leaders coming up to me saying, let the people of Joplin know we are with them, we're thinking about them, we love them.

Because the world saw how Joplin responded. A university turned itself into a makeshift hospital. Some of you used your pickup trucks as ambulances, carrying the injured on doors that served as stretchers. Your restaurants have rushed food to people in need. Businesses have filled trucks with donations. You've waited in line for hours to donate blood to people you know, but also to people you've never met. And in all this, you have lived the words of Scripture:

> We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed;
> we are perplexed, but not in despair;
> Persecuted, but not forsaken;
> cast down, but not destroyed;

As the Governor said, you have shown the world what it means to love thy neighbor. You've banded together. You've come to each other's aid. You've demonstrated a simple truth: that amid heartbreak and tragedy, no one is a stranger. Everybody is a brother. Everybody is a sister. We can all love one another.

As you move forward in the days ahead, I know that rebuilding what you've lost won't be easy. I just walked through some of the neighborhoods that have been affected, and you look out at the landscape, and there have to be moments where you just say, where to begin? How to start? There are going to be moments where, after the shock has worn off, you feel alone. But there's no doubt in my mind what the people of this community can do. There's no doubt in my mind that Joplin will rebuild. And as President, I can promise you, your country will be there with you every single step of the way. [*Applause*] We will be with you every step of the way. We're not going anywhere. The cameras may leave, the spotlight may shift, but we will be with you every step of the way until Joplin is restored and this community is back on its feet. We're not going anywhere.

That is not just my promise, that's America's promise. It's a promise I make here in Joplin; it's a promise I made down in Tuscaloosa or in any of the communities that have been hit by these devastating storms over the last few weeks.

Now, there have been countless acts of kindness and selflessness in recent days. We've already heard the record of some of that. But perhaps none are as inspiring as what took place when the storm was bearing down on Joplin, threatening an entire community with utter destruction. And in the face of winds that showed no mercy, no regard for human life, that did not discriminate by race or faith or background, it was ordinary people, swiftly tested, who said, "I'm willing to die right now so that someone else might live."

It was the husband who threw himself over his wife as their house came apart around them. It was the mother who shielded her young son.

It was Dean Wells, a husband and father who loved to sing and whistle in his church choir. Dean was working a shift at the Home Depot, managing the electrical department, when the siren rang out. He sprang into action, moving people to safety. Over and over again, he went back for others, until a wall came down on top of him. In the end, most of the building was destroyed, but not where Dean had directed his coworkers and his customers.

There was a young man named Christopher Lucas who was 26 years old, father of two daughters, third daughter on the way. Just like any other night, Christopher was doing his job as manager on duty at Pizza Hut. And then he heard the storm coming.

It was then when this former sailor quickly ushered everybody into the walk-in freezer. The only problem was, the freezer door wouldn't stay closed from the inside. So as the tornado bore down on this small storefront on Range Line Road, Christopher left the freezer to find a rope or a cord or anything to hold the door shut. He made it back just in time, tying a piece of bungee cord to the handle outside, wrapping the other end around his arm, holding the door closed with all his might. And Christopher held it as long as he could, until he was pulled away by the incredible force of the storm. He died saving more than a dozen people in that freezer.

You see, there are heroes all around us, all the time. They walk by us on the sidewalk, and they sit next to us in class. They pass us in the aisle wearing an orange apron. They come to our table at a restaurant and ask us what we'd like to order.

Just as we can't know why tragedy strikes in the first place, we may never fully understand where these men and women find the courage and strength to do what they did. What we do know is that in a split-second moment, where there's little time for internal reflection or debate, the actions of these individuals were driven by love: love for a family member, love for a friend, or just love for a fellow human being.

That's good to know. In a world that can be cruel and selfish, it's this knowledge—the knowledge that we are inclined to love one another, that we're inclined to do good, to be good—that causes us to take heart. We see with fresh eyes what's precious and so fragile and so important to us. We put aside our petty grievances and our minor disagreements. We see ourselves in the hopes and hardships of others. And in the stories of people like Dean and people like Christopher, we remember that each of us contains reserves of resolve and compassion. There are heroes all around us, all the time.

And so, in the wake of this tragedy, let us live up to their example, to make each day count, to live with the sense of mutual regard, to live with that same compassion that they demonstrated in their final hours. We are called by them to do everything we can to be worthy of the chance that we've been given to carry on.

I understand that at a memorial yesterday for Dean, his wife decided to play a recording of Dean whistling a song he loved, "Amazing Grace." The lyrics are a fitting tribute to what Joplin has been through:

> Through many dangers, toils, and snares
> I have already come;
> 'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far

And grace will lead me home . . .
Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

May those we've lost know peace, and may grace guide the people of Joplin home. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. at Missouri Southern State University. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeremiah W. "Jay" Nixon of Missouri; Rev. Randy Gariss, minister, College Heights Christian Church; Rev. Justin D. Monaghan, pastor, St. Mary's Church; Rev. Aaron Brown, pastor, Saint Paul's United Methodist Church; Mayor Michael Woolston of Joplin, MO; and Sue Wells, wife of tornado victim M. Dean Wells.

Remarks Announcing Department of Defense Personnel Changes
May 30, 2011

All right. Good morning. In a few moments, I'll be joining members of our Armed Forces and their families and veterans for the Memorial Day observance at Arlington. There and across our Nation, we'll pause to honor all those who've given their last full measure of devotion in defense of our country. Theirs was the ultimate sacrifice, but it is one that every man and woman who wears America's uniform is prepared to make so that we can live free.

The men and women of our Armed Forces are the best our Nation has to offer, and they deserve nothing but the absolute best in return. And that includes leaders who will guide them and support their families with wisdom and strength and compassion. And that's what I expect as Commander in Chief as we work to keep our Nation secure and our military the finest in the world.

I found those qualities in Leon Panetta, who I announced last month as my choice to succeed our outstanding Secretary of Defense, Bob Gates, who I thank for joining us today. And I found these qualities in the leaders who will complete our team at the Pentagon and whom I'm proud to announce today: General Martin Dempsey as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Admiral James Winnefeld as the Vice Chairman; and to succeed General Dempsey as Chief of Staff of the Army, General Ray Odierno.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to me and my national security team, including the Secretary of Defense. Since taking office, I've been very grateful for the leadership of the current Chairman, Admiral Mike Mullen, and the Vice Chairman, General Jim "Hoss" Cartwright. These two men have served our Nation with distinction for decades, and I look forward to paying tribute to their lives of service in the months ahead.

Today I'll simply say that, like President Bush before me, I've deeply valued Mike's professional steadiness and his personal integrity. On his watch, our military forces have excelled across the whole spectrum of missions, from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan to relief efforts after the Haiti earthquake. He's helped revitalize NATO, reset our relations with Russia, and steer our relationship with Pakistan and China. And I believe that history will also record Mike Mullen as the Chairman who said what he believed was right and declared that no one in uniform should ever have to sacrifice their integrity to serve their country.

I've also benefited enormously from the advice and counsel of Hoss Cartwright. Hoss is that rare combination of technical expert, from cyber to missile defense, and strategic thinker, whether it was updating our nuclear posture or preparing our military for 21st-century missions. I'll always be personally grateful to Hoss for his friendship and partnership. And as he concludes four decades of service in the Marine Corps that he loves, he can do so knowing that our Nation is more secure and our military is stronger because of his remarkable career.

And I know that Michelle joins me in saluting Deborah Mullen and Sandee Cartwright

for their decades of extraordinary service, especially as champions of our inspiring military families.

With the advice and consent of the Senate, it is our hope and expectation that Leon Panetta will soon take the reins as Secretary of Defense. General Cartwright's term ends this summer; Admiral Mullen's term ends this fall. I'm announcing my choice for their successors today because it's essential that this transition be seamless and that we stay focused on the urgent national security challenges before us. And I want to thank Deputy Secretary of Defense Bill Lynn for the continuity that he'll provide during this transition.

With nearly 40 years in uniform, Martin Dempsey is one of our Nation's most respected and combat-tested generals. In Iraq, he led our soldiers against a brutal insurgency. Having trained Iraqi forces, he knows that nations must ultimately take responsibility for their own security. Having served as acting commander of Central Command, he understands that in Iraq and Afghanistan security gains and political progress must go hand in hand. And just as he challenged the Army to embrace new doctrine and tactics, I expect him to push all our forces to continue adapting and innovating to be ready for the missions of today and tomorrow.

I was proud to nominate Marty as Army Chief of Staff, and I realized he only assumed that position last month. Marty, your tenure as Chief may go down as one of the shortest in Army history. But it's your lifetime of accomplishment that brings us here today. And I thank you for your willingness to take on this new assignment, along with your wife Deanie and your three children, all of whom have served in the Army.

Today I want every one of our men and women in uniform to hear the words that you spoke to your soldiers on your first day as Chief, because it's our shared message to all who serve, especially our troops in harm's way: "We will provide whatever it takes to achieve our objectives in the current fight."

As Vice Chairman, Admiral Sandy Winnefeld will draw on more than 30 years of distinguished service. Under his command, fighters from the aircraft carrier USS *Enterprise* pounded Taliban positions in the weeks after 9/11, and his carrier strike group played a critical role in air operations over Iraq. Having served as a NATO commander, Sandy is well known to our allies. Having served on the Joint Staff, he is known and trusted here at the White House.

Most recently, as head of Northern Command, Sandy's been responsible for the defense of our homeland and support to States and communities in times of crisis, such as the recent tornadoes and the floods along the Mississippi. He's supported our Mexican partners in their fight against the cartels and our Japanese allies in the response to their nuclear emergency. So Sandy knows that we have to be prepared for the full range of challenges. Sandy, I thank you and your wife Mary and your two sons for your continued service.

I've selected General Dempsey and Admiral Winnefeld because of their record and potential as individuals. But I've also selected them because they will make an extraordinary team, despite their competing loyalties to Army and Navy. [*Laughter*] Between them, they bring deep experience in virtually every domain: land, air, space, sea, cyber. Both of them have the respect and the trust of our troops on the frontlines, our friends in Congress, and allies and partners abroad. And both of them have my full confidence.

They both have something else. For the first time, the Chairman and Vice Chairman will have the experience of leading combat operations in the years since 9/11. Two moments in particular speak to this leadership. On the morning of September 11, 2001, the *Enterprise* was returning home from the Persian Gulf when word came of the attacks. Rather than wait for orders, Sandy took the initiative, reversed course, and put his ship and aircraft within range of Afghanistan by the next morning, setting the stage for the strikes that followed. A few years later, as Marty's 1st Armored Division was rotating out of Iraq, he suddenly got new orders. He turned his division around, shifted to new parts of Iraq, and defeated an insurgent uprising, a remarkable

maneuver that has entered the annals of Army history.

And while I know that folks across the Army are proud to see one of their own selected as Chairman, I also know this means losing their new Chief in a time of war. And that's why for the next Army Chief of Staff, I'm nominating one of the Army's most accomplished soldiers—and one of the tallest—[*laughter*]—General Ray Odierno. In three pivotal deployments to Iraq, he commanded the troops that captured Saddam Hussein, partnered with General Petraeus to help bring down the violence, and then transferred responsibility to Iraqi forces, allowing us to remove some 100,000 American troops and end our combat mission.

After years on the frontlines, Ray understands what the Army must do to prevail in today's wars, to prepare for the future, and to preserve the readiness of the soldiers and families who are the strength of America's families. And we're fortunate that Ray's dedication to our soldiers is shared by his wife Linda and their family, including their son Tony, a combat veteran and advocate for his fellow wounded warriors.

I urge our friends in the Senate to confirm these outstanding individuals as swiftly as possible. They're innovative, flexible, focused on the future, and deeply devoted to our troops and their families. General Dempsey, Admiral Winnefeld, we have much to do, from bringing our troops home from Iraq to beginning to reduce our forces in Afghanistan this summer and transitioning to Afghan lead, from defeating Al Qaida to protecting the Libyan people—all this, even as we make difficult budget decisions while keeping our military the finest fighting force in the world.

Above all, as Commander in Chief, I'll be looking to you and the rest of the Joint Chiefs for what I value most in my advisers: your honest, unvarnished advice and the full range of options, especially when it comes to our most solemn obligation, protecting the lives of our brave men and women in uniform. We have no greater responsibility, as we are reminded today when we honor all those who sacrificed so that we can enjoy the blessings of freedom.

So again, to Marty, Sandy, and Ray, as well as your families, thank you for your patriotic service and your readiness to lead once more. Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President George W. Bush; Christopher Dempsey, Megan Dempsey Bailey, and Caitlin Dempsey, children of Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, USA; L.J. and Jonathan Winnefeld, sons of Adm. James A. "Sandy" Winnefeld, Jr., USN; and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan, in his former capacity as commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia
May 30, 2011

Please be seated.

Thank you, Secretary Gates, and thank you for your extraordinary service to our Nation. I think that Bob Gates will go down as one of our finest Secretaries of Defense in our history, and it's been an honor to serve with him.

I also want to say a word about Admiral Mullen. On a day when we are announcing his successor as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and as he looks forward to a well-deserved retirement later this year, Admiral Mullen, on behalf of all Americans, we want to say thank you for your four decades of service to this great country. We want to thank Deborah Mullen as well for her extraordinary service. To Major General Karl Horst, the commanding general of our Military District of Washington; Mrs. Nancy Horst; Mr. Patrick Hallinan, the Superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery, as well as his lovely wife Doreen; and to Chaplain Steve Berry, thank you for your extraordinary service.

It is a great privilege to return here to our national sanctuary, this most hallowed ground, to commemorate Memorial Day with all of you: with Americans who've come to pay their respects, with members of our military and their families, with veterans whose service we will never forget and always honor, and with Gold Star families whose loved ones rest all around us in eternal peace.

To those of you who mourn the loss of a loved one today, my heart goes out to you. I love my daughters more than anything in the world, and I cannot imagine losing them. I can't imagine losing a sister, brother, or parent at war. The grief so many of you carry in your hearts is a grief I cannot fully know.

This day is about you and the fallen heroes that you loved. And it's a day that has meaning for all Americans, including me. It's one of my highest honors, it is my most solemn responsibility as President to serve as Commander in Chief of one of the finest fighting forces the world has ever known. And it's a responsibility that carries a special weight on this day; that carries a special weight each time I meet with our Gold Star families and I see the pride in their eyes, but also the tears of pain that will never fully go away; each time I sit down at my desk and sign a condolence letter to the family of the fallen.

Sometimes, a family will write me back and tell me about their daughter or son that they've lost, or a friend will write me a letter about what their battle buddy meant to them. I received one such letter from an Army veteran named Paul Tarbox after I visited Arlington a couple of years ago. Paul saw a photograph of me walking through section 60, where the heroes who fell in Iraq and Afghanistan lay, by a headstone marking the final resting place of Staff Sergeant Joe Phaneuf.

Joe, he told me, was a friend of his, one of the best men he'd ever known, the kind of guy who could have the entire barracks in laughter, who was always there to lend a hand, from being a volunteer coach to helping build a playground. It was a moving letter, and Paul closed it with a few words about the hallowed cemetery where we are gathered here today. He wrote, "The venerable warriors that slumber there knew full well the risks that are associated with military service and felt pride in defending our democracy." "The true lesson of Arlington," he continued, is that "each headstone is that of a patriot. Each headstone shares a story. Thank you for letting me share with you the story about my friend Joe."

Staff Sergeant Joe Phaneuf was a patriot, like all the venerable warriors who lay here and across this country and around the globe. Each of them adds honor to what it means to be a soldier, sailor, airman, marine, and coastguardsman. Each is a link in an unbroken chain that stretches back to the earliest days of our Republic. And on this day, we memorialize them all.

We memorialize our first patriots—blacksmiths and farmers, slaves and freedmen—who never knew the independence they won with their lives. We memorialize the armies of men—and women disguised as men—Black and White, who fell in apple orchards and cornfields in a war that saved our Union. We memorialize those who gave their lives on the battlefields of our times—from Normandy to Manila, Inchon to Khe Sanh, Baghdad to Helmand—and in jungles, deserts, and city streets around the world.

What bonds this chain together across the generations, this chain of honor and sacrifice, is not only a common cause, our country's cause, but also a spirit captured in a Book of Isaiah, a familiar verse, mailed to me by the Gold Star parents of Second Lieutenant Mike McGahan: "When I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here I am. Send me!' "

That's what we memorialize today. That spirit that says: "Send me, no matter the mission. Send me, no matter the risk. Send me, no matter how great the sacrifice I am called to make." The patriots we memorialize today sacrificed not only all they had, but all they would ever know. They gave of themselves until they had nothing more to give. It's natural, when we lose someone we care about, to ask why it had to be them. Why my son, why my sister, why my friend, why not me?

These are questions that cannot be answered by us. But on this day, we remember that it is on our behalf that they gave our lives—they gave their lives. We remember that it is their courage, their unselfishness, their devotion to duty that has sustained this country through all its trials and will sustain us through all the trials to come. We remember that the blessings we enjoy as Americans came at a dear cost, that our very presence here today, as free people in a free society, bears testimony to their enduring legacy.

Our Nation owes a debt to its fallen heroes that we can never fully repay. But we can honor their sacrifice, and we must. We must honor it in our own lives by holding their memories close to our hearts and heeding the example they set. And we must honor it as a nation by keeping our sacred trust with all who wear America's uniform, and the families who love them, by never giving up the search for those who've gone missing under our country's flag or are held as prisoners of war, by serving our patriots as well as they serve us, from the moment they enter the military to the moment they leave it, to the moment they are laid to rest.

That is how we can honor the sacrifice of those we've lost. That is our obligation to America's guardians, guardians like Travis Manion. The son of a marine, Travis aspired to follow in his father's footsteps and was accepted by the U.S. Naval Academy. His roommate at the Academy was Brendan Looney, a star athlete and born leader from a military family, just like Travis. The two quickly became best friends. "Like brothers," Brendan said.

After graduation, they deployed: Travis to Iraq and Brendan to Korea. On April 29, 2007, while fighting to rescue his fellow marines from danger, Travis was killed by a sniper. Brendan did what he had to do. He kept going. He poured himself into his SEAL training and dedicated it to the friend that he missed. He married the woman he loved. And his tour in Korea behind him, he deployed to Afghanistan. On September 21 of last year, Brendan gave his own life, along with eight others, in a helicopter crash.

Heartbroken, yet filled with pride, the Manions and the Looneys knew only one way to honor their sons' friendship. They moved Travis from his cemetery in Pennsylvania and buried them side by side here at Arlington. "Warriors for freedom," reads the epitaph written by Travis's father, "brothers forever."

The friendship between First Lieutenant Travis Manion and Lieutenant Brendan Looney reflects the meaning of Memorial Day: brotherhood, sacrifice, love of country. And it is my fervent prayer that we may honor the memory of the fallen by living out those ideals every day of our lives, in the military and beyond. May God bless the souls of the venerable warriors we've lost and the country for which they died.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, USA, Chairman-designate, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Timothy and Carolyn McGahan, parents of 2d Lt. Michael E. McGahan, USA; Thomas and Janet Manion, parents of 1st Lt. Travis J.L. Manion, USMC; and Amy Looney, wife, and Kevin and Maureen Looney, parents, of Lt. Brendan J. Looney, USN.

Remarks on the Nomination of John E. Bryson To Be Secretary of Commerce
May 31, 2011

The President. Good afternoon, everybody. Today I am pleased to announce that I will nominate John Bryson to be our Nation's next Commerce Secretary. John is somebody who will bring to this job a wealth of experience in the public and in the private sectors. But in my mind, nothing has prepared him more for this demanding role—a role that requires delicate

diplomacy, complex negotiations, and careful management of folks with strong views—than being the father of four daughters.

They're all here today, as is John's wife Louise. And I'm sure John agrees that Louise gets the credit for how wonderfully they have turned out.

As Commerce Secretary, John is going to be an important part of my economic team, promoting American business and American products across the globe. By working with companies here at home and representing America's interests abroad, I'm confident that he's going to help us meet the goal that I set of doubling our Nation's exports.

In this new role, John will be able to draw on decades of business experience across a range of industries, from his role on the boards of major companies like Disney and Boeing to his leadership in the clean energy industry. That's the expertise that will help us create new jobs and make America more competitive in the global economy.

Of course, John will be building on the success of outgoing Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, who has tirelessly advanced America's economic leadership abroad, securing export deals that will mean hundreds of thousands of jobs here in America, including an agreement with China, where Gary will now be serving as our next Ambassador. And we couldn't be prouder of him, and we're confident he is going to be doing an outstanding job there.

Of course, in the years ahead, a key to achieving our export goal will be promoting clean energy in America. That's how we'll reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and that's how we'll encourage new businesses and jobs to take root on our shores. John understands this better than virtually anybody. Throughout a distinguished career in which he's led nonprofits, government agencies, and large companies, he's been a fierce proponent of alternative energy.

As a young man with a degree in hand from a prestigious law school, John didn't follow his friends to a blue-chip law firm. John took a chance on an idea he cared about and cofounded the Natural Resources Defense Council, which grew into a powerful and important voice in protecting the safety of our air and water.

It was then that John caught the eye of a young California Governor named Jerry Brown. I'm not sure what happened to that guy, but—[*laughter*]—but for John it led to leadership positions in government, where he got a firsthand look at the real-life impact of energy and environmental policies, from water conservation to electricity production.

Later, in the private sector, he rose to become the chairman and CEO of Edison International, one of the Nation's largest utility companies. John headed the company for almost 20 years, during which time he helped Edison become a leader in solar and wind power and innovative approaches to proving the profitability of clean energy. Just before he retired from the company, he launched a plan to turn 65 million square feet of unused commercial rooftops into solar power stations, the largest array in the country, with enough electricity for more than 160,000 homes.

Today, he advises companies around the world as a business leader who understands what it takes to innovate, to create jobs, and to persevere through tough times. And he continues to carry himself with the integrity and sense of responsibility that have guided him his entire life. This experience and these qualities will serve our Nation well as John takes on yet another tough assignment in his career.

So I want to thank Gary again for his extraordinary service. He has done an outstanding job while at Commerce.

And, John, I am grateful to you for your willingness to serve. I look forward to working with you. And I know that you will help us deliver the kinds of growth, prosperity, and job creation here in America that we all want.

So thank you very much, both of you.

Secretary-designate Bryson. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you.

Secretary of Commerce Gary F. Locke. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:27 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Julia, Jane, Ruth, and Kathleen Bryson, daughters of Secretary-designate Bryson.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting Designations Under the Kingpin Act
June 1, 2011

Dear _____:

This report to the Congress, under section 804(a) of the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act, 21 U.S.C. 1901–1908 (the "Kingpin Act"), transmits my designations of the following seven foreign individuals as appropriate for sanctions under the Kingpin Act and reports my direction of sanctions against them under the Act:

Manuel Torres Felix (Mexico)
Gonzalo Inzunza Inzunza (Mexico)
Haji Lal Jan Ishaqzai (Afghanistan)
Kamchybek Asanbekovich Kolbayev (Kyrgyzstan)
John Harun Mwau (Kenya)
Naima Mohamed Nyakiniywa (Kenya)
Javier Antonio Calle Serna (Colombia)

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Carl M. Levin, chairman, and John S. McCain III, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Max S. Baucus, chairman, and Orrin G. Hatch, ranking member, Senate Committee on Finance; John F. Kerry, chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Patrick J. Leahy, chairman, and Charles E. Grassley, ranking member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Dianne Feinstein, chairman, and C. Saxby Chambliss, vice chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, chairman, and Adam Smith, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services; Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, chairman, and Howard L. Berman, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; Lamar S. Smith, chairman, and John J. Conyers, Jr., ranking member, House Committee on the Judiciary; David L. Camp, chairman, and Sander M. Levin, ranking member, House Committee on Ways and Means; and Michael J. Rogers, chairman, and C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, ranking member, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Remarks at the Pritzker Architecture Prize Ceremony
June 2, 2011

Thank you very much. Thank you. Please, please, everybody, have a seat.

Well, thank you, Tom, for that introduction. Thank you to the entire Pritzker family for your friendship and incredible generosity towards so many causes. I want to welcome as well the diplomatic corps that is here, as well as Secretary Arne Duncan.

On behalf of Michelle and myself, I want to begin by congratulating tonight's winner, Eduardo Souto de Moura. And I also want to recognize the members of the prize jury, who I

think have a very difficult task in choosing from so many outstanding architects all around the world.

Now, as Tom mentioned, my interest in architecture goes way back. There was a time when I thought I could be an architect, where I expected to be more creative than I turned out—so I had to go into politics instead. [*Laughter*]

And as the Pritzkers and so many others here can attest, if you love architecture there are few better places to live than in my hometown of Chicago. It is the birthplace of the skyscraper, a city filled with buildings and public spaces designed by architects like Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Frank Gehry, who is here tonight.

In fact, the headquarters of our last campaign was in a building based on a design by Mies van der Rohe. And for 2 years, we crammed it full of hundreds of people working around the clock and surviving on nothing but pizza. [*Laughter*] I'm not sure if that's what Mies had in mind, but it worked out pretty well for us.

And that's what architecture is all about. It's about creating buildings and spaces that inspire us, that help us do our jobs, that bring us together, and that become, at their best, works of art that we can move through and live in. And in the end, that's why architecture can be considered the most democratic of art forms.

That's perhaps why Thomas Jefferson, who helped enshrine the founding principles of our Nation, had such a passion for architecture and design. He spent more than 50 years perfecting his home at Monticello. And he spent countless hours sketching and revising his architectural drawings for the University of Virginia, a place where he hoped generations would study and become, as he described it, "the future bulwark of the human mind in this hemisphere."

Like Jefferson, tonight's honoree has spent his career not only pushing the boundaries of his art, but doing so in a way that serves the public good. Eduardo Souto de Moura has designed homes, shopping centers, art galleries, schools, and subway stations, all in a style that seems as effortless as it is beautiful. He's an expert at the use of different materials and colors, and his simple shapes and clean lines always fit seamlessly into their surroundings.

Perhaps Eduardo's most famous work is the stadium he designed in Braga, Portugal. Never one to settle for the easy answer, Eduardo wanted to build this particular stadium on the side of a mountain. So he blasted out nearly a million and a half cubic yards of granite from the mountainside, then crushed it to make the concrete necessary to build the stadium.

He also took great care to position the stadium in such a way that anyone who couldn't afford a ticket could watch the match from the surrounding hillsides, kind of like Portugal's version of Wrigley Field. [*Laughter*]

And that combination of form and function, of artistry and accessibility, is why today we honor Eduardo with what is known as the Nobel Prize of architecture. As Frank Gehry, a former winner of this prize, said, "Architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness." I want to thank all the men and women who create these timeless works of art, not only to bring us joy, but to help make this world a better place.

And, Tom, thank you again for your extraordinary patronage of architecture. It makes an enormous difference. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:04 p.m. at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas J. Pritzker, chairman and president of the Hyatt Foundation, sponsor of the Pritzker Architecture Prize.

Remarks at the Chrysler Toledo Assembly Complex in Toledo, Ohio
June 3, 2011

The President. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Please have a seat.

It is good to be back in Toledo. It is good to be with all of you. Now, for those of you who I've met up close, I just want you to know that

I stopped by Rudy's, had—[*laughter*]—two hot dogs, two chili dogs with onions. So I've been looking for a mint backstage. [*Laughter*] It tasted pretty good going down though.

It is wonderful to see you. We've got some outstanding public servants who are here, who've been working hard on behalf of working Americans their entire careers. One of the finest Senators that I know of, Senator Sherrod Brown, is in the house. Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur's in the house. Your mayor is in the house. Give him a big round of applause.

I just took a short tour of the plant and watched some of you putting the finishing touches on the Wrangler. Now, I—as somebody reminded—I need to call it the iconic Wrangler. [*Laughter*] And that's appropriate because when you think about what Wrangler has always symbolized, it symbolized freedom, adventure, hitting the open road, never looking back, which is why Malia and Sasha will never buy one—[*laughter*]—until maybe they're 35. [*Laughter*] I don't want any adventure for them.

I want to thank Jill for the kind introduction. Somebody on my staff asked Jill to describe herself in three words or less, and she said, "Hard working." Hard working. And her entire family agreed. So she's with the right team here at this plant, because I know there are a lot of hard-working people here. And I am—[*applause*]—I'm proud of all of you. Now, Jill was born and raised right here in Toledo. Her mother retired from this plant. Her stepfather retired from this plant. Her uncle still works at this plant. She met her husband at this plant. Now they have two children of their own, and her 3-year-old wants to work at this plant. [*Laughter*]

I don't think her story is unique. I'm sure there are a lot of you who have similar stories of previous generations working for Chrysler. And this plant or the earlier plant that used to—that I guess is still right down the road, this is the economic rock of the community. You depend on it, and so do thousands of Americans. The Wrangler you build here directly supports 3,000 other jobs, with parts manufactured all across America: doors from Michigan, axles from Kentucky, tires from Tennessee. And this plant indirectly supports hundreds of other jobs right here in Toledo. After all, without you, who'd eat at Chet's or Inky's or Rudy's? Or who'd buy all those cold ones at Zinger's? [*Laughter*] This guy right here? That's the Zinger crew right there. [*Laughter*] All right.

What would be life like here in Toledo if you didn't make these cars? Now, 2 years ago, we came pretty close to finding out. We were still near the bottom of a vicious recession, the worst that we've seen in our lifetimes, and ultimately, that recession cost 8 million jobs. And it hit this industry particularly hard. So in the year before I took office, this industry lost more than 400,000 jobs. In the span of a few months, one in five American autoworkers got a pink slip. And two great American companies, Chrysler and GM, stood on the brink of liquidation.

Now, we had a few options. We could have followed the status quo and kept the automakers on life support by just giving them tens of billions of dollars of taxpayer money, but never really dealing with the structural issues at these plants. But that would have just kicked the problem down the road.

Or we could have done what a lot of folks in Washington thought we should do, and that is, nothing. We could have just let U.S. automakers go into an uncontrolled freefall, and that would have triggered a cascade of damage all across the country. If we let Chrysler and GM fail, plants like this would have shut down. Then dealers and suppliers across the country would have shriveled up. Then Ford and other automakers could have failed too because they wouldn't have had the suppliers that they needed. And by the time the dominos stopped falling, more than a million jobs and countless communities and a proud industry that helped build America's middle class for generations wouldn't have been around anymore.

So in the middle of a deep recession, that would have been a brutal and irreversible shock to the entire economy and to the future of millions of Americans. So we refused to let that happen.

I didn't run for President to get into the auto business. I've got more than enough to do. I ran for President because too many Americans felt their dreams slipping away from them. That core idea of America that if you work hard, if you do right, if you're responsible, that you can lead a better life and, most importantly, pass on a better life to your kids, that American Dream felt like it was getting further and further out of reach.

Folks were working harder for less. Wages were flat, while the cost of everything from health care to groceries kept on going up. And as if things weren't hard enough, the bottom fell out of the economy in the closing weeks of that campaign back in 2008, so life got that much harder.

So I want everybody to understand, our task hasn't just been to recover from the recession. Our task has been to rebuild the future on a stronger foundation than we had before, to make sure that you can see your incomes and your savings rise again and you can retire with security and respect again and you can open doors of opportunity for your kids again and we can live out the American Dream again. That's what we're fighting for. [*Applause*] That's what we're fighting for.

So that's what drives me every day as I step into the Oval Office. That's why we stood by the American auto industry. It was about you—your families, your jobs, your lives, your dreams—making sure that we were doing everything possible to keep them within reach.

So we decided to do more than just rescue the industry from crisis. We decided to retool it for a new age. We said that if everyone involved was willing to take the tough steps and make the painful sacrifices that were needed to become competitive, then we'd invest in your future and the future of communities like Toledo, that we'd have your back.

So I placed my bet on you. I put my faith in the American worker. And I'll tell you what, I'm going to do that every day of the week, because what you've done vindicates my faith.

Today, all three automakers are turning a profit. That hasn't happened since 2004. Today, all three American automakers are gaining market share. That hasn't happened since 1995. And today I'm proud to announce the Government has been completely repaid for the investments we made under my watch by Chrysler because of the outstanding work that you guys did—[*applause*]—because of you. That's right.

Chrysler has repaid every dime and more of what it owes the American taxpayer from the investment we made during my watch. And by the way, you guys repaid it 6 years ahead of schedule. And last night we reached an agreement to sell the Government's remaining interest in the company. So soon Chrysler will be a hundred percent in private hands, early, faster than anybody believed.

So I'm—I couldn't be prouder of what you've done. And what's most important, all three American automakers are now adding shifts and creating jobs at the strongest rate since the 1990s. So far the auto industry has added 113,000 jobs over the past 2 years. In Detroit, Chrysler added a second shift at its Jefferson North plant. GM's adding a third shift at its Hamtramck plant for the first time ever. In Indiana, Chrysler is investing more than 1.3 billion in its Kokomo facilities. And across the country, GM plans to hire back every single one of its laid-off workers by the end of the year—every single one.

And that makes a difference for everyone who depends on this industry. Companies like a small precision tooling manufacturer in Vandergrift, Pennsylvania, have brought back many of the employees they had laid off 2 years ago. Manufacturers from Michigan to Massachusetts are looking for new engineers to build advanced batteries for American-made electric cars. And obviously, Chet's and Inky's and Zinger's, they'll all have your business for some time to come, especially those guys over there. [*Laughter*]

So this industry is back on its feet, repaying its debts, gaining ground. Because of you, we can once again say that the best cars in the world are built right here in the U.S. of A., right here in Ohio, right here in the Midwest. And each day when you clock in, you're doing more than earning your pay by churning out

cars. You're standing up for this company. You're sticking up for this way of life. You're scoring one for the home team and showing the world that American manufacturing and American industry is back.

Now, I don't want to pretend like everything's solved. We've still got a long way to go, not just in this industry, but in our economy, for all our friends, all our neighbors who are still feeling the sting of recession. There's nobody here who doesn't know someone who is looking for work and hasn't found something yet. Even though the economy is growing, even though it's created more than 2 million jobs over the past 15 months, we still face some tough times. We still face some challenges. This economy took a big hit. You know, it's just like if you had a bad illness, if you got hit by a truck, it's going to take a while for you to mend. And that's what's happened to our economy. It's taking a while to mend.

And there are still some headwinds that are coming at us. Lately, it's been high gas prices that have caused a lot of hardship for a lot of working families. And then you had the economic disruptions following the tragedy in Japan. You got the instability in the Middle East, which makes folks uncertain. There are always going to be bumps on the road to recovery. We're going to pass through some rough terrain that even a Wrangler would have a hard time with. We know that.

Audience members. No!

The President. You say a Wrangler can go over anything, huh? [*Laughter*]

But you know what, we know what's happened here. We know what's possible when we invest in what works. And just as we succeeded in retooling this industry for a new age, we've got to rebuild this whole economy for a new age so that the middle class doesn't just survive, but it also thrives.

These are tight fiscal times. You guys have all heard about the deficit and the debt, and that demands that we spend wisely, cut everywhere that we can. We've got to live within our means. Everybody's got to do their part. Middle class workers like you, though, shouldn't be bearing all the burden. You work too hard for someone to ask you to pay more so that somebody who's making millions or billions of dollars can pay less. That's not right.

And even though we're in tough times, there are still some things that we've got to keep on doing if we're going to win the future. We can't just sit back and stop. We got business we got to do. We got to make sure that our schools are educating our kids so that they can succeed. I was looking at all the gizmos and gadgets you got in this plant here. It's a lot more complicated working on a plant than it used to be. Kids have to know math and science.

We got to have a transportation and communications network that allows our businesses to compete. We used to have the best roads, the best bridges, the best airports. In a lot of places, we don't have that anymore. If you go to China, Beijing, they've got a fancier airport. You go to Europe, they got fancier trains, better roads. We can't let our infrastructure just crumble and fall apart. We're America. We've got to make that investment.

We've got to invest in innovation that will pave the way for future prosperity. We invented stuff that the world now uses and the world now makes. We've got to keep on inventing stuff and make sure it's made right here in America. And that requires investments. That requires investments in basic research and basic science.

So these are all things that will help America outinnovate, outeducate, outcompete, outhustle everybody else in the world. I want America to win the future, and I want our future to be big and optimistic, not small and fearful.

So we've got a lot of hard work that's left to do, Ohio. We've got a lot of work to do. But we're going to get there. And if anybody tells you otherwise, I want you to remember the improbable turnaround that's taken place here at Chrysler. I want you to remember all those folks who were—all those voices who were saying, "No," saying, "No, we can't." Because, Toledo, you showed that this was a good investment, betting on America's workers.

What we see here is a proud reminder that in difficult times, Americans, they dig deep, they recapture the toughness that makes us

who we are: builders and doers who never stop imagining a better future. What I see here is a reminder of the character that makes us great, that we're a people who will forge a better future because that's what we do. What I see here is an America that is resilient, an America that understands that when we come together, nobody can stop us.

And so I tell you what, I'm going to keep betting on you. And as long as I continue to have the privilege of being the President of the United States, I'm going to keep fighting alongside you for a future that is brighter for this community, for Toledo, for Ohio, for America.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:21 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Michael P. Bell of Toledo, OH; Chrysler employee Jill L. Opial, her husband Christopher, and their children Carter and Jenna; and Jan L. McClain, mother, and Robert McClain, Sr., stepfather, of Jill L. Opial.

The President's Weekly Address
June 4, 2011

Hello, everybody. I'm speaking to you today from a Chrysler plant in Toledo, Ohio, where I just met with workers, including Jill Opial. Jill was born and raised here in Toledo. Her mom and stepfather retired from this plant. She met her husband here, and now they have two children of their own. This plant has not only been central to the economy of this town, it's been part of the lifeblood of this community.

Now, the reason I came to Toledo was to congratulate Jill and her coworkers on the turnaround they helped bring about at Chrysler and throughout the auto industry. Today, each of the Big Three automakers—Chrysler, GM, and Ford—is turning a profit for the first time since 2004. Chrysler has repaid every dime and more of what it owes American taxpayers for their support during my Presidency, and it repaid that money 6 years ahead of schedule. And this week, we reached a deal to sell our remaining stake. And that means soon Chrysler will be a hundred percent in private hands.

Most importantly, all three American automakers are now adding shifts and creating jobs at the strongest rate since the 1990s. Chrysler has added a second shift at the Jefferson North plant in Detroit that I visited last year. GM is adding a third shift at its Hamtramck plant for the first time ever. And GM plans to hire back all of the workers they had laid off during the recession.

That's remarkable when you think about where we were just a couple of years ago. When I took office, we were facing the worst recession since the Great Depression, a recession that hit our auto industry particularly hard. In the year before I was President, this industry lost more than 400,000 jobs, and two great, iconic American companies, Chrysler and GM, stood on the brink of collapse.

Now, we had a few options. We could have done what a lot of folks in Washington thought we should do—nothing. But that would have made a bad recession worse and put a million people out of work. I refused to let that happen. So I said if GM and Chrysler were willing to take the difficult steps of restructuring and making themselves more competitive, the American people would stand by them, and we did.

But we decided to do more than rescue this industry from crisis. We decided to help it retool for a new age, and that's what we're doing all across the country. We're making sure America can outbuild, outinnovate, and outcompete the rest of the world. That's how we'll build an economy where you can see your incomes and savings rise again, send your kids to college, and retire with dignity, security, and respect. That's how we'll make sure we keep that fundamental American promise that if you work hard and act responsibly, you'll be able to pass on a better life to your kids and your grandkids.

Now, we've got a ways to go. Even though our economy has created more than 2 million private sector jobs over the past 15 months and continues to grow, we're facing some tough headwinds. Lately it's high gas prices, the earthquake in Japan, and unease about the European fiscal situation. That's going to happen from time to time. There are going to be bumps on the road to recovery.

We know that. But we also know what's happened here at this Chrysler plant. We know that hard-working Americans like Jill helped turn this company and this industry around. That's the American story. We're a people who don't give up, who do big things, who shape our own destiny. And I'm absolutely confident that if we hold on to that spirit, our best days are still ahead of us.

Thanks for tuning in, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:25 p.m. on June 3 at the Chrysler Toledo Assembly Complex in Toledo, OH, for broadcast on June 4. In the address, the President referred to Jan L. McClain, mother, Robert McClain, Sr., stepfather, Christopher J. Opial, husband, and Carter J. and Jenna E. Opial, children, of Chrysler Toledo Assembly Complex employee Jill L. Opial. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 3, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on June 4.

Statement on the Death of Lawrence S. Eagleburger
June 4, 2011

With the passing of former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, our Nation has lost a distinguished diplomat and public servant. Through more than four decades of service, first in the Army and then as a dedicated Foreign Service officer and statesman, Lawrence Eagleburger devoted his life to the security of our Nation and to strengthening our ties with allies and partners. As Deputy Secretary and then Secretary of State under President George H.W. Bush, he helped our Nation navigate the pivotal days during the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the cold war. Our Nation is grateful for Secretary Eagleburger's lifetime of service, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family, especially his three sons.

NOTE: The statement referred to L. Scott, L. Andrew, and L. Jason Eagleburger, sons of former Secretary Eagleburger.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany
June 7, 2011

President Obama. Good morning, everybody.

Audience members. Good morning.

President Obama. Chancellor Merkel, members of the German delegation: On behalf of Michelle and myself, it is our great pleasure to welcome you back to the White House, and on behalf of the American people, it is our great honor to welcome you back to the United States.

Today marks the first official visit and state dinner for a European leader during my Presidency. It's only fitting. The transatlantic alliance is the cornerstone, is the heart, of our efforts to promote peace and prosperity around the world. And Germany, at the heart of Europe, is one of our strongest allies. And Chancellor Merkel is one of my closest global partners.

Our alliance, at its core, is a partnership between our peoples: the generations of German Americans who helped build a strong America; the Americans who, during a long cold war, helped to defend a free Germany; and citizens of both our countries—entrepreneurs, innova-

tors, students, scientists, and soldiers—who work together and forge the future every day.

At a time when some have asked whether the rise of new global powers means the decline of others, this visit reaffirms an enduring truth. Our alliances with nations like Germany are more important than ever. Indeed, they're indispensable to global security and prosperity.

As two of the largest and most dynamic economies, the United States and Germany can show that the prosperity we seek is best achieved when nations invest in our greatest resource: our people and their ability to compete and innovate in the 21st century.

As members of the most successful alliance in human history, our commitment to our common defense is also a pillar of global security, from completing our mission in Afghanistan to preventing terrorist attacks to achieving our vision of a world without nuclear weapons.

And finally, as people around the world imagine a different future, the story of Germany and our alliance in the 20th century shows what's possible in the 21st. Wars can end. Adversaries can become allies. Walls can come down. At long last, nations can be whole and can be free.

Madam Chancellor, the arc of our lives speaks to this spirit. It's obvious that neither of us looks exactly like the leaders who preceded us. [*Laughter*] But the fact that we can stand here today, as President of the United States and as Chancellor of a united Germany, is a testament to the progress, the freedom, that is possible in our world.

Chancellor Merkel, to the members of the German delegation: We are honored to have all of you here, as allies, as partners, but most of all, as dear friends. So *herzlich willkommen.*

Chancellor Merkel. Mr. President, dear Barack, dear Michelle, Mr. Vice President, members of both Cabinets, guests of honor, my fellow countrymen, ladies and gentlemen: Thank you very much for this very warm and very moving reception that is overwhelming. I am indeed delighted—and I say this on behalf of all of the members of my delegation—to be back in Washington, DC, again.

About 20 months ago—and this was almost 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall—I had the great honor and privilege to address both Houses of Congress, a wonderful moment. And I'm certain this day today shall be another such unforgettable moment.

Mr. President, receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom from you tonight is something that I consider to be not only an exceptionally gracious gesture of appreciation, and I see this as a gesture of appreciation for the whole of this united Germany. It is also a testimony of the very, very close ties that bind our two countries together.

We Germans know that America has always been a true friend to us. Our friendship has grown and matured throughout the decades, and every day it is filled with new life. More than 600,000 Americans are working for German companies here in the United States. And the reverse is also true: More than 600,000 Germans work for American companies in Germany.

There are many and diverse exchange programs at schools and universities, and they help us to win over numerous young people to serve as bridge builders between our two countries. Seventeen million members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their families have lived in Germany ever since the Second World War. And they have served their country with honor and distinction and rendered an inestimable service to their country and to us. The more than 50,000 American soldiers who are currently stationed in Germany are more than welcome every day.

I could mention many more examples of the close ties that bind our two countries together, but let me underline one thing in particular. When Germany and Europe were divided by the wall and barbed wire, America consistently stood on the side of freedom and resolutely stood by us Germans as we made our way towards unity and freedom, and this we shall never forget.

Today, we are just as closely linked to each other by the bonds of friendship as we were those 20 years ago. We are standing on a firm foundation, and standing and supported by this

firm foundation, we tackle the current challenges we both face. Germany and the United States are partners, sharing responsibility for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. We are pulling in the same direction trying to keep Iran from following its course of developing a nuclear forces capability. In North Africa, we support the struggle for freedom. And in the Middle East, we support efforts to fill the peace process with new life. Together, we mastered the aftershock of the global economic and financial crisis.

Yes, Germany and the United States do share the same values: democracy and freedom, rule of law, and the universality of human rights. And it is for this very reason that a close partnership with the United States is just as much part and parcel of Germany's raison d'être as is European integration. Both belong together. Both are and remain the pillars of German foreign policy.

[*At this point, Chancellor Merkel concluded her remarks in English.*]

Mr. President, dear Barack, in Berlin in 2008, you spoke to more than 200,000 people. And in your address, you said America has no better partner than Europe. And now it's my turn to say Europe and Germany have no better partner than America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:36 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Chancellor Merkel was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. Chancellor Merkel spoke partly in German, and those portions of her remarks were translated by an interpreter.

The President's News Conference With Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany
June 7, 2011

President Obama. Please, everyone, have a seat. Good morning again. It is an honor to welcome my good friend and partner Chancellor Merkel back to the White House. We had a wonderful dinner last night, one on one—although, as you saw again this morning, Angela's English is much better than my German.

Michelle and I are very much looking forward to hosting the Chancellor and Professor Sauer at tonight's state dinner, where I'll have the privilege of presenting Angela with the Medal of Freedom.

As I said earlier, Germany is one of our strongest allies. We see our partnership in the drive of our workers and businesses who sustain the largest trade relationships in the world. We see it in the students and teachers, the scientists and researchers who are unlocking new innovations, including the clean, renewable energy sources that we need to combat climate change and create the industries of the future.

We see our partnership in the courage of our servicemembers who stand shoulder to shoulder in Afghanistan, where Germans serve under Americans and Americans serve under Germans. Chancellor Merkel, I want to thank you and the German people for your strong commitment to this vital mission, and our hearts go out to the wounded warriors and all the families—American and German and others—whose loved ones have given their lives to keep us safe. We remember and honor them all.

We see our partnership in the skill of our diplomats who prevent the spread of deadly weapons and stand up for democracy in Europe and beyond and in the passion of our development experts as they work to avert suffering in countries like Sudan.

This is the essence of our alliance: two peoples, bound by common values and committed to the security, the prosperity, and the dignity not just of our own citizens, but those far beyond our borders. And that's also the essence of my partnership with Chancellor Merkel.

Angela, I believe this is our tenth meeting together. That doesn't include the many phone calls and video conferences that we seem to

have at all hours of the day and night. There's hardly any global issue where we don't consult one another. I've said before, I always value Angela's pragmatic approach to complex issues, her intelligence, her frankness. I trust her. And as she's said herself, it's just fun to work together. And it has been again fun today, even as we've addressed some very urgent challenges.

Germany is one of our largest trading partners, and we discussed how to keep our economies growing and create the jobs that our people need. As Angela mentioned in her remarks at the opening ceremony, hundreds of thousands of American jobs are supported by our exports to Germany; hundreds of thousands of Americans work for German companies that have chosen to invest in America. I'm pleased that billions of dollars more in German investment is making possible new plants—steel in Alabama, manufacturing in Tennessee—all of which go to create thousands of new American jobs.

The Chancellor and I discussed the need to eliminate regulations and barriers so we can unleash even more trade and investment, including in the area of electric vehicles, where both our countries are leaders and where the possibilities of American-German cooperation are enormous. And of course, I very much appreciated the Chancellor's views on the financial situation in Europe, which we agree cannot be allowed to put the global economic recovery at risk.

With regard to security, we discussed our progress in Afghanistan, where we've broken the Taliban's momentum, trained Afghan forces, and are now preparing to turn a corner in our efforts. We're scheduled to begin the transition to Afghan lead. And I reiterated that we'll begin reducing American forces this summer, even as we join with Germany and our NATO allies in supporting Afghans in their political and economic efforts to forge a lasting peace.

I thanked the Chancellor for her support for the principles that I laid out last month as the basis for negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. And I want to commend Angela for her personal efforts to bring the parties back to the negotiating table. Just as we agree that both sides will need to make difficult choices, we agree that unilateral actions—such as Palestinians seeking a vote on statehood at the U.N. General Assembly—should be avoided.

We agreed that Iran's continuing nuclear program, and its refusal to engage in any meaningful talks with the international community, remain a very serious concern. So we agreed that if the International Atomic Energy Agency this week determines again that Iran is continuing to ignore its international obligations, then we will have no choice but to consider additional steps, including, potentially, additional sanctions, to intensify the pressure on the Iranian regime.

Finally, we discussed the historic changes underway in North Africa and the Middle East. With regard to Libya, I'd note that Germany's deployment of additional resources and personnel to Afghanistan has allowed other NATO allies to increase their support for the mission to protect the Libyan people. The Chancellor and I have been clear: Qadhafi must step down and hand power to the Libyan people, and the pressure will only continue to increase until he does.

And following our agreement with our G–8 partners in Deauville, the Chancellor and I discussed our support for political and economic reform across the Middle East and North Africa, especially in Tunisia and Egypt. The United States and Germany are the two largest donors of assistance to the region, and we agree that this historic moment must not be squandered.

Along with the entire world, we have an enormous stake in seeing that these transitions to democracy succeed. And given the Chancellor's own remarkable life story, and her experience helping to heal the wounds of the past and build a united Germany, I very much appreciate her leadership and her partnership in this effort.

So again, I'm very grateful to the Chancellor for being here. I'm confident that the great alliance between our nations is going to remain an indispensable pillar of a world that's more secure and more prosperous and more just.

And I very much appreciate the personal friendship that I enjoy with the Chancellor. So, Angela.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. President, dear Barack, I would like to use this opportunity to thank you most warmly for this wonderful reception. I'm saying this also on behalf of the members of my delegation.

This reception, I say, to the White House is welcome, that I see as a testimony of our very close friendship, of our partnership. If we remind ourselves of the fact that every fifth American today rightly points, and perhaps also with a certain degree of pride, to his German ancestry or her German ancestry, we can safely say that we indeed share common roots. And if we look at the names that loom large in American history, Frederick Steuben, but many leading leaders of the German—of the American business community, Guggenheim, Steinway, Strauss, Singer—all of these German names. So that is a broad foundation on which we can build.

And we are still grateful that so many Germans found asylum and a safe place to live during the Second World War in the United States. We have a broad-based exchange of students. We have cooperation in science. We work in air and space with the ISS. We share a lot of successes. I mentioned the 50,000 soldiers—American soldiers—that are present today in Germany are very welcome indeed in my country.

Let me say this on a personal note. Without the United States of America, I would, in all probably, not be able to stand here before you today. Overcoming the cold war required courage from the people of Central and Eastern Europe and what was then the German Democratic Republic, but it also required the steadfastness of Western partner over many decades when many had long lost hope of integration of the two Germanies and Europe. Many perhaps didn't even want this anymore. But the then-President George Herbert Walker Bush said German unity, European unity, is indeed something that deserves our support.

So there are a lot of tasks that we have in common, a lot of challenges that we need to meet together. We're doing this in this spirit of freedom, of shared values. We want to bring these values to bear on the international agenda. We're dealing and—ever since the month of January—with these issues, in the Arab Spring in Syria, in Tunisia, in Egypt, in Libya. That is a very great challenge.

But if I remember—let me take you back perhaps to the period after the Second World War when, through the Marshall Plan, Germany was able to get back on its feet again. I see this also as our common task—as a task of the Europeans and of the Americans and the Germans—to support this change, to make it possible for these young people to have a perspective for the future.

We talked about this. We talked about Germany, in particular, with its experience and vocational training schemes, offering an alliance for jobs, for training and education. We're working together with the Egyptians and the Tunisians on this with our foundations. Building up institutions, for example, is something that we want to do.

I said that we, after all, opened up an office in Benghazi that will serve as a clearinghouse for training schemes, for example, for the security forces, the police there on the ground, and we will also, through an additional commitment to Afghanistan, lend a contribution to mastering the common challenges.

We talked about economic issues. In the G–20, we worked very closely together, and I believe we have been able to make a lot of progress there and be successful. The situation in the Eurogroup in Europe obviously is also of very great interest over here. Our Finance Ministers talked about these issues, but we, too, talked about this at some length. And I said, yet again, for Germany, Europe is not only indispensable, it is part and parcel of our identity. We've always said German unity, European unity and integration, that's two parts of one and the same coin. But we want obviously to boost our competitiveness.

We are very much aware—very well aware of the fact—both of us, I think, that we are in a

tough competition with the emerging economies. So Europe needs to be competitive, and we also need to be competitive if we wish to remain an interesting economic partner for the United States. This has to be done on the basis of strength, of competitiveness. So this is why the Germans are pursuing a policy of a competitive Europe, and this is—and it is also an approach of solidarity. So we need to show solidarity to the countries that need it, but they also need to come to enhance competitiveness.

We talked about the Middle East peace process. I think this was a very important initiative to point out yet again: that the United States of America, just as Germany and the European Union, wish to promote a further development of the peace process. We're saying this to both countries: We want a two-state solution. We want a Jewish State of Israel and alongside a independent Palestinian state. Unilateral measures are not helping at all to bring about this cause, and we agree that we wish to cooperate very closely on this, because as we both say, time is of the essence. And looking at the changes in the Arab area and the Arab region, it would be a very good signal indeed if it came out that talks between the parties are again possible.

The commitment we take in Afghanistan shows that we're very close. We're very grateful for the close cooperation in the north of Afghanistan that has turned out excellently. We share the opinion that in Afghanistan we wish to approach an—the matters in the sense of an integrated security approach, a network security approach. It was said we want to build up not only the military side of it, but the civil side of it. We wish to go in together, out together. Afghanistan will need our support, however, in the long run. So we will not abandon them.

Barack, thank you very much again for the very friendly talks, for this very warm atmosphere, for making it possible to have this exchange of views in a very candid matter. I think even though we may look differently than our predecessors we have a lot in common, I think, and we have a lot to discuss.

Thank you.

President Obama. I'll start off with Steve Holland of Reuters.

U.S. Economy/Global Financial Markets

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You both face economic troubles. Mr. President, how worried are you about the threat of a double-dip recession? What specific policies are you considering to help head it off? And abroad, do you expect Germany to fund another bailout for Greece?

And, Chancellor Merkel, is Europe concerned about the possibility of the U.S. defaulting on its debt? Thank you.

President Obama. I'm not concerned about a double-dip recession. I am concerned about the fact that the recovery that we're on is not producing jobs as quickly as I want it to happen.

Prior to this month, we had seen 3 months of very robust job growth in the private sector. And so we were very encouraged by that. This month you still saw job growth in the private sector, but it had slowed down. We don't yet know whether this is a 1-month episode or a longer trend.

Obviously, we're experiencing some headwinds, gas prices probably being most prominent. It has an enormous impact on family budgets and on the psychology of consumers. And so we are taking a range of steps to make sure that we've got an energy policy that can bring some stability to world oil prices.

But the overall trend that we've seen over the last 15 months—2 million—over 2 million jobs created over the past 15 months, a rebounding of the manufacturing sector in the United States that's exemplified by the recovery of the Big Three automakers here, all indicates that we have set a path that will lead us to long-term economic growth.

But we've still got some enormous work to do. And as long as there are some folks out there who are unemployed, looking for work, then every morning when I wake up, I'm going to be thinking about how we can get them back to work.

Some of the steps that we took during the lame duck session—the payroll tax, the extension of unemployment insurance, the investment

in—or the tax breaks for business investment in plants and equipment—all those things have helped. And one of the things that I'm going to be interested in exploring with the members of both parties in Congress is how do we continue some of these policies to make sure that we get this recovery up and running in a robust way.

We then have a set of long-term competitiveness challenges that aren't so different from what Germany or any advanced country is having to go through in the 21st century, where we have emerging markets who are becoming more competitive themselves. And we're going to have to step up our game.

So making sure that our school systems are working well and we've got the best-trained workers in the world; making sure that we're investing in infrastructure so that we can attract businesses to our shores; making sure that we reform our tax system so it's less complex, more transparent, and is encouraging of business investment; and getting a hold—getting a handle on our deficit in a way that's balanced and sensible.

So we're going to have some days where things aren't going as well as we'd like. There are going to be some times where we're surprised with better economic data than we expected. We are on the path of a recovery, but it's got to accelerate, and that's going to require a continuation of a lot of the steps that I've already discussed.

With respect to the European situation, I have had extensive discussions with Angela about the situation there. It's a tough situation, and I think we all acknowledge it.

Greece's debt is significant, and it is taking some difficult steps to improve its situation. But they're under the gun from the international capital markets, and as part—as a member of the euro zone, they necessarily are going to be looking to other members of the euro zone to help them figure out a path forward.

Germany is going to be a key leader in that process. And the politics of it are tough. You recall how difficult it was for us to make investments in our own auto industry or to make sure that we didn't have a financial meltdown here. Well, imagine if you're having to make those same decisions with 27 other countries with respect to somebody else's economic problems. That gives you some sense of how tough the politics are.

But I am confident that Germany's leadership, along with other key actors in Europe, will help us arrive at a path for Greece to return to growth, for this debt to become more manageable. But it's going to require some patience and some time, and we have pledged to cooperate fully in working through these issues both on a bilateral basis, but also through international and financial institutions like the IMF.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, in Europe we are very well aware of a responsibility for the global economy. Barack just outlined what the Americans are doing in order to generate growth and combat unemployment, which is what we're doing in Europe as well.

Through the global financial and economic crisis, we've seen how interdependent we are. And the stability of the euro zone is therefore an important factor of stability for the whole of the global economy. So we do see clearly our European responsibility, and we're shouldering that responsibility together with the IMF.

We've seen that the stability of the euro as a whole will also be influenced if one country is in trouble. And that is what this assistance is all about. There are actually—there's actually a ban on bailouts in the treaties underpinning the Stability and Growth Pact. But if a country is in danger and thereby endangers the euro as a whole, it is in each and every country's vested interest to see to it that this common currency area is not endangered. And we will act in such a way, however, that sustainability is guaranteed, as I said previously.

As far as the situation in the United States is concerned, I think each and every one ought to deal with his or her own problems. We in Europe have our hands full already with what we need to do, and I'm absolutely convinced that as we shoulder our responsibility and meet our responsibility, so will the United States of America.

Chancellor Merkel's Presidential Medal of Freedom/German-U.S. Relations

Q. [*Inaudible*]—of her accomplishments in the past, or is it as well an expression of the expectations that you would have for the future? And if so, where do you see areas globally where the Chancellor and Germany can do more?

And, Madam Chancellor, addressed to you, Germany is, after all, actually being praised in America through its economic might, its progress. Does this mean, however, also that it entails certain enhanced responsibilities and where you have to live up to responsibilities, or do you think Germany needs to do more in the future?

President Obama. With respect to the Medal of Freedom, it certainly is a recognition of the Chancellor's remarkable career. I think not only has she been an excellent steward of the German economy and the European project, but she represents the unification of Europe through her own life story and the capacity to overcome the past and point towards a brighter future.

So the extraordinary work that she's already done, I think, would by itself merit the Medal of Freedom. Fortunately, she's going to be around quite a bit longer. And so she's going to be doing outstanding work in the future. Her leadership will be critical on economic issues of the sort that we just discussed in the euro zone. And I very much compliment her on the courage with which she approaches some of these very difficult political issues, at some significant political costs to herself.

On the international stage, there's no issues that we don't coordinate closely with Germany. And our work in Afghanistan, our work together with NATO, the approach that we've taken with respect to the Middle East and the Arab Spring, our approaches to development issues and how we help the poorest countries find their place in the international economy, these are all going to be areas where, I think, Angela's leadership will be welcomed and will be absolutely critical for us to be able to achieve the kind of more peaceful and prosperous world that we want to see.

So she's not finished yet; she's got a lot more work to do. I know sometimes she probably wouldn't mind a couple of days off, but she'll have to wait for that.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, I believe when you see me standing here before you today and receiving this prestigious award of the Medal of Freedom, it will perhaps also be a moment where one needs to look back to 1989 and German unification and what actually happened there.

If you like, Germany entered into a qualitatively new phase. We were all of a sudden a reunited country, a country with all rights, but also with all the obligations.

If I think back to the beginning of the nineties, we were struggling for a decision that would enable us to send ships on the Adria, taking part in reconnaissance missions. And if you compare this to where we are today, you see the road that we have traveled in the direction of assuming more international responsibility. Military missions, participating in military missions are part and parcel of that: on the Balkans, in UNIFIL, in Afghanistan, in combating piracy, and in many other areas.

But what's also important in this context—and that's an approach that we both share, Barack and I—is that we need to combine military and civil engagement. And so I think we live up to our international responsibilities. The world is full of problems that we need to address. That's a reality, and you cannot have enough partners that work together with you in a coordinated way, and this is why this cooperation is so extremely important for our common future.

I'm saying this also as someone who comes from Europe. The changes in North Africa are changes that happen on our doorstep. Those are our immediate neighbors, and we have a choice. Either this works out well or we have an enormous refugee problem.

And so it's not only out of charity that we help people. There's not only a moral obligation. But we have also a vested interest in seeing

to it that this continent, this region, comes on its feet.

Libya/Global Financial Markets/U.S. National Debt

Q. Thank you, Mr. President, Chancellor Merkel. Mr. President, you called Chancellor Merkel one of your closest global allies, but you have differed in approach on a couple of key issues—Libya and the global economic recovery—over the years. In Libya, do you believe more German military involvement in that operation would bring it to a faster, more decisive conclusion? And did you ask Chancellor Merkel for such a commitment?

And on the European economic question, did you ask her specifically to drop her insistence that the private sector become involved in the Greek debt bailout, which is holding up that and which you've blamed the European sluggishness for America's own stalled recovery?

Chancellor Merkel, if I could ask you, do you believe NATO was mistaken in getting involved militarily in Libya? And if not, why are you not more directly involved militarily there? And what more can you do to promote an accelerated European economic recovery? Thank you.

President Obama. Well, first of all, with respect to Libya, I think it is important to note that this is a NATO operation that's fully integrated, which means you have German personnel who are involved actively in these activities in their NATO role. As I indicated before, Germany has stepped up and taken additional responsibilities in Afghanistan that have freed up resources for us to be able to conduct our operations in Libya.

Chancellor Merkel and I share the belief that Qadhafi needs to step down for the sake of his own people. And with respect to the pace of operations and participation, I think if you look at where we were 3 months ago and where we are now, or 2 months ago and where we are now, the progress that has been made in Libya is significant.

Our goal there was to protect the Libyan people from a potential slaughter. We have done so. Benghazi is free from threat of the Libyan regime right now. They are hunkered down. Misurata, which was under severe attack, is now in a situation where, although still threatened, Qadhafi's forces have been pushed back. And that—so what you're seeing across the country is a inexorable trend of the regime forces being pushed back, being incapacitated. You're seeing defections, oftentimes of some very high-profile members of the Qadhafi Government, as well as the military. And I think it is just a matter of time before Qadhafi goes.

And each country that is part of this coalition is playing a different role. So we did a whole bunch of stuff at the front end to disable Qadhafi's air defenses, to take out some of their most significant firepower. Now we are in a more supportive role as other countries have stepped up.

Germany—we did discuss last night Germany's role, and there is going to be a lot of work to do when Qadhafi does step down, in terms of getting the Libyan people back on their feet: economic, political work that's going to have to be done. And my expectation is going to be that there will be full and robust German support as there has been in the past from Germany on a wide range of issues.

With respect to the economy, as I said before, this is a tough and complicated piece of business. And ultimately, Europeans are going to have to make decisions about how they proceed forward. What you have to do is balance the recognition that Greece has to grow, and that means that there has to be private investment there. They've got to make structural reforms that make them more competitive. They have to have greater transparency in their economic system.

But given their level of debt, it also means that other countries in the euro zone are going to have to provide them a backstop and support. And frankly, people who are holding Greek debt are going to have to make some decisions, working with the European countries in the euro zone, about how that debt is managed.

What we've done is to say to Germany and other countries that are involved: We will be there for you; we are interested in being supportive. We think that America's economic growth depends on a sensible resolution of this

issue. We think it would be disastrous for us to see an uncontrolled spiral and default in Europe, because that could trigger a whole range of other events. And I think Angela shares that same view.

And so we're going to have to work through this issue methodically, and we will be supportive in any ways that we can to make sure that all the best ideas are brought to bear on the problem.

But let me just make one larger point about—because it relates also to the question that Steve asked earlier. I think people on both sides of the Atlantic are understandably frustrated with the ups and downs of the economy, the world economy. And it's just very important for folks to remember how close we came to complete disaster.

The world economy took a severe blow 2½ years ago. And in part, that was because of a whole set of policy decisions that had been made and challenges that had been unaddressed over the course of the previous decade. And recovering from that kind of body blow takes time. And recovery is going to be uneven, and there are going to be times where we are making progress, but people are still skittish and nervous, and the markets get skittish and nervous, and so they pull back because they're still thinking about the traumas of just 2½ years ago.

And so economic data that in better times would pass without comment, now suddenly, people wonder, well, are we going to go back to this terrible crisis? And all that affects consumer confidence. It affects business confidence. It affects the capital markets.

And so our task is to not panic, not overreact, to make sure that we've got a plan, a path forward in terms of how we make our economies competitive, making sure we're dealing with the structural issues and the basic fundamentals that will allow us to grow and create a good, sound business environment.

So in America, for example, the need for us to get a handle on our debt and our deficit is going to be important; making sure that our investments in education, in clean energy, in infrastructure, that we find a way to do that.

In Germany and Europe, there are going to be different sets of challenges. But the important point is, is that—I think Angela would agree—what we try not to do is to look day to day at whatever is happening in the marketplace or whatever headlines are taking place and be reactive. Our job is to set a course for the medium and the long term that assures that not only both our economies grow, but the world economy is stable and prosperous. And I think we can do that together.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, maybe I should comment briefly on this as well. Two and a half years ago, we experienced something that didn't exist for decades, ever since the twenties and thirties of the previous century. And generally around, because we cooperated so well, we were able to ward off the worst that could have happened. And now we have a situation that we believe is something that meets the challenges of the future.

Before the crisis, we discussed what sort of format are we to choose: a G–20, G–8, G–30. Now we have the G–20, which is a good format, has proved to be a good format, and has, for example, as regards settling this situation and setting up rules for the financial markets, has been able to come up with credible solutions. And that has strengthened our cooperation, although we do debate matters in a controversial manner. For example, do we need more stimulus? How much do we need? How many savings programs and cuts programs do we need? What structural programs do we need?

I think that shows great openness, because we're all breaking new ground. These are unchartered waters, and we cannot, with all due respect, rely completely on the financial business community to give us good advice every day. They have their own vested interest. So we were dependent on our own good and sound judgment. And exchanges will be necessary on this in the future as well.

As regards Libya, the United Nations resolution is applied—still applies. Qadhafi needs to step down, and he will step down. I'm convinced of that, because we have made great progress. And then there will still be a lot of

work to do. And in the future when we have the talks on this, we agree that Germany is showing—will be showing that it is responsible and committed to the Libyan cause. There will be a lot of problems still to contend with, and we'll be in the closest possible contact.

We support—Germany supports the NATO operation simply by being present in the stance there, and also by stepping up our commitment in Afghanistan. It is our joint will that this NATO mission is successful. And this is important for the people in Libya, but it's also important for NATO, for the alliance at large. And here we have one heart of allies that beats with the other allies.

Germany-U.S. Relations

Q. The German decision on Libya has burdened the German-American relationship somewhat. Were you surprised by these irritations and this warm reception? Is this something like a reset button or a breaking up—out into a new future? And you, President Obama, were in Buchenwald and Baden-Baden, but as a new President, not in Berlin. Why not? And will this happen once you have your new term of office?

Chancellor Merkel. Well, I believe that this present event here today, after all, has been agreed for a long time, and our partnership, our friendship rests on a very broad basis, as I said this morning. And sometimes there may be differences of opinion in such a friendship and partnership.

What's important is that we wish each other every success. Not each and every one can be in on missions. For example, we participated in UNIFIL, where the United States are not participating.

Without, sort of, mixing up things here, there will be areas in the world where we shoulder different responsibilities. Partners are doing together with others, things that we believe can be useful. And this is what we want to do. We want to see to it that our contribution is bringing about a success, is encouraging other people to now see we wish to live in a democracy, this is good, this is sensible.

So I see today's event as a wonderful reception, but it's not something that's so unusual. I see it in a continuity of our very close relations, and I do see it as another starting point, if you like, for meeting other challenges of the future.

On the question of Germany, you said that the American President, some people say in Germany, has not really been to Germany at all. He was in Dresden, he was in Buchenwald, he was in Baden-Baden for the NATO conference. Berlin opens its arms to him every day. But the Berliners can also wait. They have proved this throughout their history.

President Obama. I look very much forward to being in Berlin. And the last time I was there, we had a lot of fun. [*Laughter*] And I'm sure that I'll have a wonderful time the next time I'm there as well. And I appreciate you assuming that I'll have another term. [*Laughter*] And so I'll have plenty of time to be able to put Berlin on my schedule. All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

Chancellor Merkel. And I can promise that the Brandenburg Gate will be standing for some more time.

President Obama. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:41 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joachim Sauer, husband of Chancellor Merkel; and Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. Chancellor Merkel referred to Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner; and Minister of Finance Wolfgang Schaeuble of Germany. She also referred to the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Chancellor Merkel and some reporters spoke in German, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on Representative Daniel D. Boren's Decision Not To Seek Reelection
June 7, 2011

I want to thank Representative Boren for his years of service representing the people of Oklahoma's Second District in the United States Congress. Over the course of his career, both in Washington and in the Oklahoma Legislature, Dan has exemplified a commitment to creating jobs and economic opportunity for his constituents and rural communities, all the while continuing his family's long line of public service and dedication to the State of Oklahoma. I commend him for his service and wish him well in his future endeavors.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany With the Presidential Medal of Freedom
June 7, 2011

The President. Good evening. *Guten Abend.* Michelle and I are honored to welcome you as we host Chancellor Merkel, Professor Sauer, and the German delegation for the first official visit and state dinner for a European leader during my Presidency.

Angela, you and the German people have always shown me such warmth during my visits to Germany. I think of your gracious hospitality in Dresden. I think back to when I was a candidate and had that small rally in Berlin's Tiergarten. [*Laughter*] So we thought we'd reciprocate with a little dinner in our Rose Garden.

Now, it's customary at these dinners to celebrate the values that bind nations. Tonight we wanted to do something different. We wanted to pay tribute to an extraordinary leader who embodies these values and who's inspired millions around the world, including me, and that's my friend Chancellor Merkel.

More than five decades ago, in 1957, the first German Chancellor ever to address our Congress, Konrad Adenauer, spoke of his people's "will of freedom" and of the millions of his countrymen forced to live behind an Iron Curtain. And one of those millions, in a small East German town, was a young girl named Angela.

She remembers when the wall went up and how everyone in her church was crying. Told by the Communists that she couldn't pursue her love of languages, she excelled as a physicist. Asked to spy for the secret police, she refused. And the night the wall came down, she crossed over, like so many others, and finally experienced what she calls the "incredible gift of freedom."

Tonight we honor Angela Merkel not for being denied her freedom or even for attaining her freedom, but for what she achieved when she gained her freedom. Determined to finally have her say, she entered politics, rising to become the first East German to lead a united Germany, the first woman Chancellor in German history, and an eloquent voice for human rights and dignity around the world.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is the highest honor a President can bestow on a civilian. Most honorees are Americans; only a few others have received it, among them Pope John Paul II, Nelson Mandela, and Helmut Kohl. So please join me in welcoming Chancellor Merkel for the presentation of the next Medal of Freedom.

[*At this point, Maj. Reginald McClam, USMC, Marine Corps Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. You can all applaud. [*Laughter*]

[*Chancellor Merkel moved to the podium, but the President then returned to the podium and continued his remarks as follows.*]

I've got to do the toast. [*Laughter*] I want to conclude by inviting all of you to stand and join

me in a toast. And I want to do so with the words that Angela spoke 2 years ago when she became the first German leader to address our Congress since Chancellor Adenauer all those decades ago.

Her words spoke not only to the dreams of that young girl in the East, but to the dreams of all who still yearn for their rights and dignity today: To freedom, which "must be struggled for, and then defended anew, every day of our lives."

Cheers. *Zum Wohl.*

[*Chancellor Merkel then gave brief remarks.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joachim Sauer, husband of Chancellor Merkel; former President Nelson R. Mandela of South Africa; and former Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chancellor Merkel.

Remarks at Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria, Virginia
June 8, 2011

Thank you so much, everybody. It is great to be back at NOVA. I come here often enough that I think I should be getting some credits. [*Laughter*] Plus I've got an in with Dr. Biden, and her husband owes me big time, so—[*laughter*].

It is wonderful to see everybody here. We've got some special guests. Our outstanding Labor Secretary, Hilda Solis, is here. Where's Hilda? Congressman Jim Moran is here, putting on his jacket. The mayor of Alexandria, Bill Euille, is here. The president of Northern Virginia Community College, Dr. Robert Templin, is here.

I just had a chance to see the labs where students are training for jobs working on advanced vehicles, led by a teacher who's here, Ernie Packer, who spent almost three decades at Ford Motor Company. Where's Ernie? Did we get him back here? There he is.

That's why my sleeves are rolled up. I was getting under the hood. [*Laughter*] You guys want me to work on your car—don't do it. [*Laughter*]

But I was so impressed not only with the skills that the young people were learning, but also with the enthusiasm and excitement of what they see as a potential future. All across America, there are students like the ones that I've met here at NOVA, folks who are gaining skills, they're learning a trade, they're working hard and putting in the hours to move up the profession that they've chosen or to take a chance on a new line of work. Among the students I was meeting here, we saw some—looked like 18-, 19-year-olds, but we also saw a couple of folks who were midcareer or even had retired and now were looking to go back to work.

So these are men and women like David Korelitz. David started at a car dealership as a apprentice. And he'll tell you, he was at the low end of the totem pole. Then he entered GM—the GM automotive program here at NOVA, started picking up new skills, led to better and more challenging work. He began to prove himself as a technician. And after he graduated, he kept moving up. So now David is hoping to work hard enough to earn a management position at the dealership where he was an apprentice just a few years ago.

And I want to quote David, because I think it captures what happens here at a place like NOVA. David said, whatever he ends up doing, the automotive training program here was "the spark [he] needed to get [his] career started." The spark he needed to get his career started.

Lighting a spark. That's what community colleges can do. That's what learning a new skill or training in a new field can do. And that's the reason that I'm here today. We've got to light more sparks all across America, and that's going to make a difference in the futures of individuals who are looking for a better life, but it's also going to make a difference in America's future. So I've set a goal that by the end of this decade, we are going to once again lead the world in

producing college graduates. To achieve that, we're making college more affordable and we're investing in community colleges.

But the goal isn't just making sure that somebody's got a certificate or a diploma. The goal is to make sure your degree helps you to get a promotion or a raise or a job. And that's especially important right now. Obviously, we're slowly recovering from a very painful recession. But there are too many people out there who are still out of work, without a job that allows them to save a little money or to create the life they want for their families. That's unacceptable to me. It's unacceptable to all of you.

So we've got to do everything we can, everything in our power to strengthen and rebuild the middle class. We've got to be able to test new ideas, pull people together, and throw everything we've got at this challenge. So we're going to have to have all hands on deck.

And that's why last year, we brought together major companies and community colleges to launch a new campaign, led by business leaders from across the country, called Skills for America. And the idea was simple: If we could match up schools and businesses, we could create pipelines right from the classroom to the office or the factory floor. This would help workers find better jobs, and it would help companies find the highly educated and highly trained people that they need in order to prosper and to remain competitive.

So today we're announcing several new commitments by the private sector, colleges, and the National Association of Manufacturers to help make these partnerships a reality. Through these efforts, we're going to make it possible for 500,000 community college students—half a million community college students—to get industry-accepted credentials for manufacturing jobs that companies across America are looking to fill. Because the irony is, even though a lot of folks are looking for work, there are a lot of companies that are actually also looking for skilled workers. There's a mismatch that we can close, and this partnership is a great way to do it.

So if you're a company looking to hire, you'll know exactly what kind of training went into a specific degree. If you're considering attending a community college, you'll be able to know that the diploma you earn will be valuable when you hit the job market. And a lot of that's already happening here at NOVA. If you participate in the GM program here, like David did, you can count on being prepared to work on GM cars.

We're also taking some additional steps today: a new resource on the Internet so workers can sign on and see what jobs their skill sets allow them to access all across America. It's interesting, I was talking to Ernie, and he was saying how a lot of the young people who go through this program, they think initially that they can only get a job at a dealership. And then they realize that there are a whole range of possibilities out there. You might end up working for a company maintaining its fleet. You might end up working for NHTSA, making sure that automobile safety is practiced all across the country. So part of what this web site will do is give people a better idea of the scope of opportunities available for the skill sets that they're gaining.

A new push to make it easier for high school students to get a head start on their degrees at 3,500 participating schools, because part of our task is making sure that young people even in high school see a relevance between what they're learning and a potential career.

New mentoring programs and scholarships for folks who are thinking about careers in engineering, something that's going to be vital to our manufacturing success. And more business leaders, companies, colleges, and organizations are joining this campaign all the time.

What all these steps boil down to is this: Right now there are people across America with talents just waiting to be tapped, sparks waiting to be lit. Our job is to light them. And there's no time to lose when we've got folks looking for work, when we've got companies that need to stay competitive in this 21st-century economy, and when we know that we've got to rebuild a middle class, and a lot of that is going to have to do with how well we do

in manufacturing and how well we do in those jobs that are related to making products here in the United States of America.

The fact is we understand what it takes to build a stronger economy. We know it's going to require investing in research and technology that will lead to new ideas and new industries. We know it means building the infrastructure, the roads and bridges, and manufacturing the new products here in the United States of America that create good jobs. Above all, it requires training and educating our citizens to outcompete workers from other countries.

That's why today's announcement is so important. And that's why I also want to see Congress—so Jim, get working on this—[*laughter*]—pass the "Workforce Investment Act" to build on this progress with new and innovative approaches to training and to really figure out what works. We've got a lot of programs out there. If a program does not work in training people for the jobs of the future and getting them a job, we should eliminate that program. If a program is working, we should put more money into that program. So we've got to be ruthless in evaluating what works and what doesn't in order for folks to actually obtain a job and industry to get the workers they need. That's how we're going to help more Americans climb into the middle class and stay there. That's how we're going to make our overall economy stronger and more competitive.

Let me just make this point. If we don't decide to do this—it's possible that we could choose not to do the things that I just talked about. We could choose not to make investments in clean energy or let tuition prices rise and force more Americans to give up on the American Dream. We could choose to walk away from our community college system. We could say to ourselves, you know what, given foreign competition and low wages overseas, manufacturing's out the door and there's not much we can do about it. We could decide, in solving our fiscal problems, that we can't afford to make any of these investments and those of us who've done very well don't have to pay any more taxes in order to fund these investments.

But I want to make clear: That's not our history. That's not who we are. I don't accept that future for the United States of America. I see a United States where this Nation is able to outcompete every country on Earth, where we continue to be the world's engine for innovation and discovery. I see a future where we train workers who make things here in the United States and continue a important and honorable tradition of folks working with their hands, creating value, not just shuffling paper. That's part of what has built the American Dream.

And if anybody doubts that future is possible, they should come to this school and talk to the young people who are getting trained and the folks who are doing the training. They ought to go to Detroit, where auto companies are coming back and hiring again after a lot of people declared that entire industry dead and buried. They ought to travel all across the country like I do and meet men and women who are starting businesses, testing new ideas, bringing new products to market, and helping this country come back stronger than before.

You know, we are in a tough fight. We've been in a tough fight over the last 2½ years to get past a crippling recession, but also to deal with the problems that happened before this recession, the fact that manufacturing had weakened, the middle class was treading water. I don't think the answer is for us to turn back. I think the answer is to stand up for what this country is capable of achieving and to place our bets on entrepreneurs and workers and to get behind some of the great work that's being done here at NOVA and in schools all across the country.

That's how we're going to win this fight. That's how we're going to win the future.

For all of those who are participating, including National Association of Manufacturers and the companies who have already begun to participate in this process, thank you. These young people are excited. They're ready to get trained. They're ready to go to work. America's ready to win the future.

Thank you very much everybody. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. in the Engineering Building. In his remarks, he referred to Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

Remarks Honoring the 2010 NCAA Football Champion Auburn University Tigers

June 8, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody. Please have a seat, have a seat. Welcome to the White House. And congratulations to the Auburn Tigers. War Eagle! I notice you all brought some Alabama weather up here too.

I want to start by recognizing some very proud Members of Congress who are here today. Members of Congress delegation, where are you? Here you go, all the Alabama crew right here—Shelby, Sessions too. They are very proud. All they do is just talk about you all, Alabama and Auburn. I don't know which way they——

Audience member. Auburn——

The President. Okay. See? [*Laughter*]

Head Coach Gene Chizik. Auburn first.

The President. And I want to welcome back to the White House—this is a point of personal privilege—the biggest Auburn fan I've ever met: my former Press Secretary, Robert Gibbs, is in the house, along with my main man Ethan Gibbs—[*laughter*]—who has inherited the passion for Auburn that his dad had. Look at Gibbs, has his tie and everything. Come on. [*Laughter*]

As some of you may know, Gibbs was born in Auburn. His parents worked in the university library, so he and his brother grew up watching the Tigers play. So earlier this year when the team was making its run to the championship, Robert was insufferable. He had a little statue of Aubie on his desk. [*Laughter*] He had his son Ethan—he and Ethan would roll the trees in front of the yard after a big win. [*Laughter*] So this is a big day for him.

Now, this visit was originally scheduled to happen a couple of months ago. But 2 days before this team was supposed to be in Washington, the State of Alabama was hit by a series of devastating tornadoes.

So Michelle and I went down with many members of the congressional delegation to meet some of the folks who had lost loved ones, make sure everything possible was being done to help the community get back on its feet. And it was a heartbreaking visit. Coach and I were just talking about—you don't understand the devastation until you see it firsthand.

But what was also inspiring was the amount of strength and generosity that was shown by so many people in the midst of so much tragedy. And that includes the members of this program. Two days after the tornado, almost 70 Auburn coaches, players, and athletic department staff, led by Coach, traveled to Pleasant Grove and Cullman to help out with relief efforts.

And even though one of the toughest hit areas by the storm was the home of the Crimson Tide, this team knew what we all know in situations like this, which is we're all on the same team. We're all Americans first and foremost, and we've got an obligation to support each other in times of need.

So I've said before, I will say again, we will continue to stand with the victims of these disasters, whether they're in Tuscaloosa or in Joplin, Missouri, which I just visited a couple weeks ago. We're going to do this as long as it takes until families are able to rebuild.

Now, the reason, obviously, we're celebrating today is because of a happier moment for the people of Alabama and to congratulate the Tigers for winning their first national title since before I was born. [*Laughter*] And I'm getting quite a bit of gray hair. [*Laughter*] So that was a long wait for Tigers fans.

It wasn't always an easy road. This team played one of the toughest schedules in all of college football last year. In nine games, they came from behind to win, including after being

down 24–0 on the road to Alabama. Unbelievable—that was an unbelievable game. I watched that game. I'm busy, but I watched that game. [*Laughter*] That was unbelievable.

As senior linebacker Josh Bynes so eloquently put it, "Guys just went out there and fought their behinds off." That's what he said: "behinds." [*Laughter*]

Now, of course, I've got to give credit to a couple players that haven't gotten a lot of attention, but did a great job. There's a guy named Cam Newton—[*laughter*]—who had a pretty good season and went on to win the Heisman Trophy. So obviously, that's really extraordinary.

There's a guy named Fairley who won the Lombardi Trophy—the top defensive lineman in the Nation. You know, this guy is rough, Fairley. [*Laughter*] You don't want to be tackled by him; you really don't. No.

Defensive lineman Nick Fairley. Cam.

The President. See, he said Cam, so they're thinking next year in the NFL—[*laughter*]—they're not going to be on the same team.

But as crucial as Cam and Nick were to this team's success, obviously, this is a team sport and you only win it with a team that is passionate and dedicated. They had help from teammates like freshman Michael Dyer who ran—where's Michael? There he is down there—ran an incredible 37-yard run on that final drive after everybody except Michael thought he had been tackled. [*Laughter*] Actually, I give—that was some good coaching—[*laughter*]—because the folks on the sidelines were all like, "Get up, get up!" [*Laughter*]

Teammates like senior Wes Byrum, who knew he had to knock the winning field goal through for the guys who had been fighting that whole game. Where's Wes? There you go. Good job, Wes.

And obviously, Coach Chizik, who in just two seasons had helped the Tigers go from good to great.

And then there's the Auburn family: the folks who celebrated at Toomer's Corner no matter what, no matter what the weather was; folks who haven't missed a game in decades and have waited a generation for a feeling like this. So I'm sure that I speak on behalf of the team. Everybody here has a little piece of that title.

So I want to congratulate this team once again on a great season. I want to thank them for taking the time during this visit to meet with some local kids from DC and share a little joy and inspiration. One of the things that the First Lady is constantly reminding our young people about is athletics is not just a spectator sport. Even if you're not going to be a Nick Fairley or a Cam Newton, you can still get out there and move. And so for the players here to send that message to young people I think is tremendous, and we really appreciate it.

So I hope everybody has a wonderful visit, and once again, I just want to say congratulations to an outstanding team and national champions. Thank you so much.

Coach Chizik. Thank you, Mr. President. And what an honor and a privilege, obviously, it is for the whole Auburn family to be able to stand here in the White House today and really embrace this moment. And this is not just a great championship team; it's got great, great character, it's got great kids, and they care about communities. They care about service. They care about doing all the right things.

What I'd like to do today is I'd like to introduce one of our seniors, which, by the way, I really want to say a word of appreciation. So many of our seniors that have been—they're spread out. They're—they've moved on with their life, decided to come back today just for this event.

The President. That's great.

Coach Chizik. And it's big for us. But Kodi Burns, one of the most selfless players we have on our football team, has a special presentation to you from Auburn University.

The President. All right, Kodi. What do we got here?

Wide receiver Kodi Burns. Mr. President, on behalf of Auburn football, I want to present you with this helmet.

The President. That's a nice-looking helmet there. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Burns. As well as your exclusive Auburn football national championship jersey.

The President. Exclusive. There you go. [*Laughter*]

All right. Let's—we're going to strike the podium so we can get a good picture.

[*At this point, the podium was removed, and the President posed for a photograph with members of the Auburn University Tigers organization.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:10 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Robert and Nancy Gibbs, parents of former White House Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs.

Statement on the United Nations High Level Meeting on AIDS
June 8, 2011

As we mark the 30th year of our fight against HIV/AIDS, I join the United Nations High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS in honoring the memory of all those we have lost to this disease and rededicating ourselves to the fight against this pandemic. Thanks to an aggressive global response, fewer people are being infected, a diagnosis is no longer a death sentence, and more people with HIV/AIDS are living long, vibrant lives. But so long as tens of millions of people live with this devastating disease, and so long as nearly 2 million people die from AIDS-related diseases every year, we cannot and will not rest.

As the global leader in the fight against AIDS, the United States will continue to do our part. That's why my administration has increased funding for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief to record levels, increased our support to the Global Fund To Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and launched our Global Health Initiative to help countries build their capacity to deliver better health care, including for mothers and children with HIV/AIDS. And we will continue to invest in the pioneering research that holds the promise of new treatments and brings us closer to cures.

Still, it is not enough to simply do the same things the same way. This week's meeting at the United Nations is an opportunity for all of us to do better. More governments need to contribute to this effort. More awareness is needed so that no one with HIV/AIDS is stigmatized or discriminated against. More coordination is needed so that the investments we're making are preventing as many infections, delivering as many treatments, and saving as many lives as possible. No nation can do this alone. Together, we can resolve to meet our shared responsibilities. Together, we can come closer to our vision of a world without HIV/AIDS.

Statement on the Retirement of Michael E. Leiter as National Counterterrorism Center Director
June 9, 2011

Mike Leiter's entire career has been one of service to our Nation, and I know his decision to leave the National Counterterrorism Center was undoubtedly a difficult one for him. Serving in two administrations since 2007, Mike led the National Counterterrorism Center with dedication and unwavering determination during challenging and demanding times, and our Nation is grateful for his many contributions to our safety and security. Mike has been a trusted adviser to me and to the entire national security team, providing us with an in-depth understanding of terrorist activities that affect our Nation's security. I am confident that Mike will

be leaving the National Counterterrorism Center, the counterterrorism community, and the Nation in a significantly stronger position to confront the terrorist threats we face.

Statement on Russia Day
June 10, 2011

I join the American people in sending my best wishes to all those who are celebrating Russia Day. Since the first Congress of the Russian Federation declared a new sovereign nation on June 12, 1992, the United States and Russia have worked to build a relationship that makes both our nations more secure and more prosperous. Together, we have reduced our nuclear arsenals, expanded trade and commerce, and deepened the ties between our people. Here in the United States, we are grateful for the many Russian Americans who have helped to strengthen our country and who play a vital role in bringing the Russian and American people even closer.

The President's Weekly Address
June 11, 2011

Hello, everyone. I want to spend a couple minutes talking with you today about our economy. We've just come through the worst recession since the Great Depression, and while our economy as a whole has been growing and adding private sector jobs, too many folks are still struggling to get back on their feet. I wish I could tell you there was a quick fix to our economic problems, but the truth is, we didn't get into this mess overnight, and we won't get out of it overnight. It's going to take time.

The good news is, when it comes to job creation and economic growth, there are certain things we know we can do. Now, government is not and should not be the main engine of job creation in this country. That's the role of the private sector. But one thing government can do is partner with the private sector to make sure that every worker has the necessary skills for the jobs they're applying for.

On Wednesday, I announced commitments by the private sector, colleges, and the National Association of Manufacturers that will make it possible for 500,000 community college students to get a manufacturing credential that has the industry's stamp of approval. If you're a company that's hiring, you'll know that anyone who has this degree has the skills you're looking for. If you're a student considering community college, you'll know that your diploma will give you a leg up in the job market.

On Monday, I'll travel to North Carolina, where I'll meet with my jobs council and talk about additional steps we can take to spur private sector hiring in the short term and ensure our workers have the skills and training they need in this economy.

There are also a few other things we know will help grow our economy and give people good jobs that support a middle class lifestyle. We know that a quality education is a prerequisite for success, so we're challenging States and school districts to improve teaching and learning and making it a national goal to once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020.

We know that more and more jobs are being created in the clean energy sector, so we're investing in wind power, solar power, and biofuels that will make us less dependent on foreign oil and clean up our planet for our children. These are steps we know will make a difference in people's lives, not just 20 years from now or 10 years from now, but now and in the months to come.

In the end, the folks I hear from in letters or meet when I travel across the country, they aren't asking for much. They're just looking for a job that covers their bills. They're looking for a

little financial security. They want to know that if they work hard and live within their means, everything will be all right. They'll be able to get ahead and give their kids a better life. That's the dream each of us has for ourselves and our families. And so long as I have the privilege of serving as President, I'll keep fighting to put that dream within the reach of all Americans.

Have a great weekend, everybody.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:30 a.m. on June 10 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on June 11. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 10, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on June 11.

Remarks During a Meeting With the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness in Durham, North Carolina
June 13, 2011

Well, listen, first of all, I just want to thank everybody for the seriousness, the diligence that you've displayed already on this jobs council. When we formed this we understood that we had averted the worst possibilities of a Great Depression. We'd gotten the economy growing again. We had stabilized the financial system. So we had made great strides from where we had been in 2008. But we understood even though jobs were being created, they were not being created fast enough.

And I've said this before, I will say it again: I wake up every single morning thinking about how can I make sure that anybody who wants a job is able to get a job. And that's what I think about when I go to bed at night. And I am absolutely confident about America's prospects for the 21st century, but we do have some challenges. And these challenges predated the financial crisis that we had in 2008. If you look at what had happened between 2001 and 2008, job growth was slow even when the economy was growing at a pretty good clip.

So we've got a combination of factors, as Jeff said, that come into how do we create jobs. I cannot think of a better group of people to help us tackle it than those who are sitting around the table.

A couple of just points that I would make so far. Over the last 15 months, we have seen over 2 million jobs created. And prior to this month, we had seen job growth at a pretty good clip for the previous 3 months. So we had some good reports. This last one showed that job creation has not moved as quickly as we'd like.

Now, there are some headwinds that all of us are aware of. High gas prices, I think, had a depressing effect on consumer confidence. It is something that I think was offset to some degree by the payroll tax cut that we initiated in December. That's made a difference in helping families to absorb it. But when you're reminded every single day that your costs are going up, that's going to constrain how you think about spending and investment and so forth. So that's been a challenge.

Europe is still uncertain. And what's happening with respect to the situation with Greece, that's something that's created a headwind for some businesses. And I also note that Washington getting its act together and making sure that we've got a credible plan for not simply raising the debt limit, but also medium- and long-term deficit reduction is going to be something that's critically important and we're spending a lot of time focused on.

The other thing that we had heard in the last meeting was the question of regulation and regulatory uncertainty. And I took this very much to heart. As I've said before, I am a big believer that it's important for us to have core regulations that help protect consumers from being taken advantage of, that protect our air and water. I think everybody here around this table recognizes that having a smart regulatory structure can actually enhance market competitiveness. But it's also important to make sure that these regulations are serving a purpose and that the benefits exceed the cost.

So what we've done is to initiate a full-scale regulatory review, not just of pending regulations, but actually looking back for the first time at all existing regulations. And I have to tell you, I just did an address on this where I was sitting next to a stack of *Federal Registers* where all the regulations are—exist, and it was a pretty high stack. And it was a reminder that very often Washington passes laws, but doesn't do what every business around the table does, which is to look back and see, did what we do in the past still make sense in the current operating environment?

Cass Sunstein has been leading this process, and we released an initial report where we've got scores of regulations that we are prepared to eliminate because they no longer apply to current situations. We think it is going to be able to save billions of dollars for businesses, just in terms of compliance costs, over the next several years.

And this is an example of how ideas that were generated from this job council we're going to act on. Sometimes, we can do it administratively; we don't need legislative cooperation in order to make it happen. Sometimes, we are going to need legislation. And where we do, having a group like this that can reach a bipartisan consensus and then push Congress to act I think can make an extraordinary difference.

So overall, we are feeling optimistic about how this council can help drive our agenda over the next 12 to 18 months. I want to thank, in particular, Penny, who has been doing some great work on skills training and how we get community colleges linked up with businesses more effectively. We had a terrific event just last week with the National Association of Manufacturers.

One of the things that I think we're all aware of is that we're going to have to up our game when it comes to how we train people for the jobs that actually exist and design credentialing training programs, apprenticeship programs, so that people know if they complete this work, they are prepared to work at an Intel or GE or any of the businesses that are represented around this table.

A couple of other things that I'll just mention very quickly. I know that one of the things that people may be wondering about, at least the press who've traveled with me as opposed to the folks who have been down here for the last day, is why are we here at Cree? This is an example of the kind of company that I think all of us want to see being promoted all across the country. This is a company that is specializing in LED lighting, has been extraordinarily effective in driving down the costs of high-efficiency lighting that is, over time, I think going to make a huge difference, not just for businesses who use the technology, but also for a country that needs to figure out how do we operate in a more energy-efficient way.

They've been adding jobs. They have trained their workers. They've got a terrific relationship with the surrounding community as well as the institutions of higher learning in the area. And so this is a good example of entrepreneurship focused on technologies of the future, linking up with training American workers for those jobs. And my understanding is not only are we focused on the domestic market, but we're also focused on the export market and competing internationally, which is going to be extraordinarily important.

So in conclusion, let me just say how appreciative I am of all of you. As soon as all this press clears out of the way, we're going to be having a more open conversation I think. As I understand, Jeff, you guys are going to give me some reports in terms of what the current environment is out there.

As Jeff said, ultimately, job growth is going to be driven by the private sector. But we can make some smart decisions to encourage businesses to feel like this is a—the right time to invest and that America is the right place to invest. And that's what we want to find out from you, is what are you hearing out there, what can we do to make sure that we're boosting job growth not just over the next year, but over the next 20 years.

Thanks, Jeff. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at Cree, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to Jef-

frey R. Immelt, chairman and chief executive officer, General Electric Co., in his capacity as Chair of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness; Penny S. Pritzker, chairman and founder, Pritzker Realty Group, in her capacity as a member of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness; and Cass R. Sunstein, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Administrator, Office of Management and Budget.

Remarks at Cree, Inc., in Durham
June 13, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody. Thank you, everybody. Please, everybody, have a seat. Thank you.

It is good to be back in North Carolina. It's great to be back at Cree. To all the employees at Cree, thank you so much for your outstanding work and hospitality. I actually visited this plant about 3 years ago. I was still running for office. Somebody in the plant showed me a picture of the two of us together, and I looked so much younger then. [*Laughter*] But—so I—it's true, I've got a lot more gray hair now than I did the last time I visited. But I have a better plane—[*laughter*]—so it's a fair trade.

Now, that day, a wonderful man gave me a heck of an introduction. He introduced himself by saying: "I am a Cree employee, and I help build the most energy-efficient LEDs in the world. That's what I do." And his name was David Jones. This—David's the guy with the picture. Where's David? David must be—there he is. David's back there. As you can see, David's shy—[*laughter*]—and lacks enthusiasm—[*laughter*]—but nevertheless.

So I got to see David on—looking at the new LED production line—which he now runs, by the way—and it's easy to see why you guys are so proud of what you do. This company has made amazing progress. And the technology at this company is growing in leaps and bounds. In fact, as I was talking to Chuck here at Cree, he was explaining, how just since my last visit, LEDs have become—how much more efficient have they become?

Cree, Inc., President, Chief Executive Officer, and Chairman of the Board of Directors Charles M. Swoboda. Twice—doubled in efficiency.

The President. Doubled in efficiency just since my visit 3 years ago—just since my visit 3 years ago.

So today, the small business that a group of NC State engineering students founded almost 25 years ago is a global company. It's got 5,000 employees. Next month, your new production line will begin running 24/7. And soon you'll add another 400,000 square feet of space on a new site next door. So you're helping to lead a clean energy revolution. You're helping lead the comeback of American manufacturing. This is a company where the future will be won.

So David was telling the truth when he said how great it is to work here and how grateful he is for the opportunities that it provides. But I also remember something else that David said that day. He talked about how, even with a good job at a great company, it was getting tougher for working people to provide for their families without having to cut corners.

What he said was, "Where I'm—where am I squeezing that balloon to make sure that my family has a life, that we're moving forward, that we're progressing?" Now, that was in 2008, before the financial crisis, before the bottom fell out of the economy, before a vicious recession that made things that much tougher for working families.

So the world has changed since the first time David and I met. And for a lot of our friends and neighbors, that change has been painful. Today, the single most serious economic problem we face is getting people back to work. We stabilized the economy. We prevented a financial meltdown. An economy that was shrinking is now growing. We've added more than 2 million private sector jobs over the last 15 months alone. But I'm still not satisfied. I will not be satisfied until everyone who wants a good job that offers some security has a good job that offers security. I won't be satisfied

until the empty storefronts in town are open for business again. I won't be satisfied until working families feel like they're moving forward again, that they're progressing again. That's what drives me every day when I walk down to the Oval Office: you, your families, your jobs, your dreams, and everything it takes to reach those dreams.

Now, our economic challenges were years in the making, and it will take years to get back to where we need to be. But for all the hits we've taken, we are still America. We've got the largest economy in the world, we've got the best workers in the world, we've got the finest universities in the world, we've got the most successful companies in the world. We've got everything we need to help our workers adapt and to help our fellow Americans through this tough period.

But it's going to take all of us working together: the private sector, government, nonfor-profits, academia. And that's what I came back to Cree to talk about today. I brought some folks with me. I travel with a bigger entourage these days than I did 3 years ago. [*Laughter*]

So the group I brought today is a group called the Council on Jobs and Competitiveness. These are leaders who have decades of experience in running some of America's best businesses, creating jobs, understanding what it takes to grow our economy and strengthen our middle class. They come from the business sector, but also labor, universities. Most importantly, they come from outside Washington. And they've decided to dedicate their time and energy to this singular task: How do we create more jobs in America?

And by the way, we put this together many months ago, not in response to one jobs report, but because we understood even though the economy was growing, it wasn't growing as fast as we want, and it wasn't producing as many jobs as we want. And so I told them I wanted to hear every smart, forward-thinking idea that they have to quicken the pace of job growth and make sure our economy and our workers can adapt to changing times.

So we just had an opportunity to meet backstage to talk about how we get our job creation engine running faster, and I want to highlight a couple of their ideas that apply to companies like this, to companies like Cree.

Now, the advanced manufacturing that you do here requires skilled workers. And you guys are lucky; you've got excellent schools nearby, like UNC and NC State and Duke. Reggie, I—don't worry, I'm not forgetting Duke. [*Laughter*] Every time I come here, there's some ACC thing that I got to work through. [*Laughter*]

So—but because you've got these great schools, you can hold your own talent draft, not just in basketball, but when it comes to highly skilled workers. And Durham Public Schools has strengthened that talent pipeline by forming a school of engineering at Southern High School, which celebrated its first graduating class last week. And we are so pleased with that because we want more engineers in America.

Here's why this is so important. Right now there are more than four job seekers for every job opening in America. But when it comes to science and high-tech fields, the opposite is true. The businesses represented here tell me they're having a hard time finding high-skilled workers to fill their job openings.

And that's because today, only 14 percent of all undergraduate students enroll in what we call the STEM subjects: science, technology, engineering, and math. Of those students, one-third will switch out of those fields, and only about two in five will graduate with a STEM degree or certification within 6 years.

So these are the jobs of the future. These are the jobs that China and India are cranking out. Those students are hungry because they understand if they get those skills they can find a good job, they can create companies, they can create businesses, create wealth. And we're falling behind in the very fields we know are going to be our future.

So we can do better than that. We must do better than that. If we're going to make sure the good jobs of tomorrow stay here in America, stay here in North Carolina, we've got to

make sure all our companies have a steady stream of skilled workers to draw from.

So last year, in pursuit of this goal, we brought together companies and community colleges to forge pipelines directly from the classroom to the office or the factory floor, helping workers find better jobs and helping companies find the right workers. Last week, we announced new commitments by the private sector, as well as colleges and the National Association of Manufacturers, to make it possible for 500,000 community college students to earn industry-accepted credentials for manufacturing jobs that companies across America are looking to fill.

So what happens here now is businesses and trade organizations are going into the community colleges, helping to design the training for specific jobs that they know are going to be available, in some cases providing the equipment to help those students train on. The students then have an incentive. They know, you know what, if I do well here, I know I'm going to have a job.

And today, with the leadership of the jobs council, we're announcing an all-hands-on-deck strategy to train 10,000 new American engineers every year. So—[*applause*]—and by the way, our jobs council, led by Jeff Immelt, they're doing this not counting on a whole bunch of Federal funding. Private sector companies are teaming up to help us promote STEM education, to offer students incentives to finish those degrees, and then to help universities fund those programs. They're going to double their summer internship hiring.

We're talking about companies like Intel, whose CEO, Paul Otellini, is here today. And Paul is heading up our task force for the jobs council in helping to figure this out, because he understands Intel's survival depends on our ability to get a steady stream of engineers. I've been, by the way, to the Intel plant out in Oregon. It is unbelievable. It's out of—something out of science fiction. And I pretended like I understood what they were saying the whole time. [*Laughter*]

But that's what's going to drive our competitiveness in the future. We know that if we're going to maintain our leadership in technology and innovation, our best companies need the world's brightest workers: American workers.

Now, that brings me to a second idea that we discussed backstage. At Cree, you're putting people back to work in a field that has the potential to create an untold number of new jobs and new businesses right here in America, and that's clean energy. And my administration has invested heavily in clean energy manufacturing, because I want to see the LEDs and solar panels and wind turbines and electric cars of tomorrow made right here in the U.S. of A. I want them made right here.

We invested in this company with a tax credit that allowed you to boost capacity and lower costs and hire hundreds of new workers. And with a grant from the Department of Energy, you've made incredible breakthroughs in smart grid technology to transmit clean, renewable energy across the country more efficiently at less cost.

Now, breakthroughs like these have the potential to create new jobs in other sectors of the economy as well. Think about it. Cree makes energy-efficient lighting that can save businesses and consumers a lot of money. And there are a lot of buildings out there that need upgrading. And there are a lot of workers ready to do the upgrades. Construction workers were hit harder than anybody by recession. Almost one in six construction workers are out of work. And that makes no sense at a time when we've got so much of America that needs to be rebuilt.

So this is what led us to create what we're calling the Better Buildings Initiative, putting people back to work doing the work that America needs done. Upgrading buildings for energy efficiency could save America's businesses up to $40 billion a year on their utility bills, and obviously, that $40 billion could be better spent growing and hiring new workers. It will boost manufacturing of energy-efficient products like those made here at Cree. It will put contractors and construction workers back on the job. It is a win-win-win-win proposition.

So today the members of my job council updated me on their efforts to push this initiative in the private sector. And they're working

closely with a champion for this kind of energy innovation, President Bill Clinton, who I asked to colead the effort with them.

And as we get this moving, it can snowball, because right now the big impediment is a lot of companies know they would save money if they had more energy efficiency, but they may not have the initial capital to do it. In some cases, building owners, they're thinking to themselves, well, if I put in all this new lighting, am I going to be able to recover it with—through the rents or the leases that I'm able to obtain? And so what we've got here are premier experts who are going to be able to help us design this program to really get this to take off.

Now, this is just two examples of the kind of work that's being done by the jobs council. They had all sorts of recommendations that they're talking about. How do we deal with making sure our regulations make sense so that we start eliminating ones that don't work, aren't making consumers better off, or aren't improving our quality of life? How do we make sure that small businesses get financing? Because there are a lot of small businesses out there that are still struggling to get capital. Large businesses are doing pretty well. So they're tackling a whole host of different issues.

Now, their recommendations aren't going to solve every problem that we face. But slowly, steadily, they're helping us to move forward. We're going to pursue these ideas and any good ideas that are out there, no matter where they come from. Because even though this is a big country with a great diversity of opinion—as you discover when you're President—[*laughter*]—we won't agree with each other on everything, we can agree on some basic things.

We can agree on educating our children and training our workers to be the best in the world. We should be able to agree on investing in the research and technology that leads to new ideas and new industries. We should be able to agree on developing clean energy and manufacturing jobs that come with it. It makes sense for us to rebuild our infrastructure and all the jobs that it can create. That's what's going to be required to grow our economy. That's what it takes to help our people prosper. That's how we're going to get to the future that we dream about for our children and our grandchildren.

And the main thing I wanted to communicate to all of you here at Cree, everybody here in North Carolina, and all across the country is we're going to get there. I know that because I've seen it here at this company, where you're helping to lead the clean energy revolution. I've seen it across the Midwest, where automakers are coming back and hiring again, even after reading their own obituaries just 2 years ago. I've seen it from coast to coast, where men and women are testing new ideas and starting new businesses and bringing new products to market and helping America come back stronger than before.

So I am optimistic about our future. We can't be complacent. We shouldn't pretend that a lot of folks out there are not still struggling. But I am absolutely optimistic that we've got everything it takes for us to succeed in the 21st century. Americans do not respond to trials by lowering our sights or downscaling our dreams or settling for something less. We are a people who dream big, even when times are tough, especially when times are tough. We're a people who reach forward, who look out to the horizon and remember that together, there's nothing we can't do.

And as long as I have the privilege of being your President, I'm going to be right there with you, every step of the way, fighting for a brighter future in this community, in North Carolina, and across the United States of America.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:53 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Personal Aide to the President Reginald L. Love; and Jeffrey R. Immelt, chairman and chief executive officer, General Electric Co., in his capacity as Chair of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness.

Statement on Washington Governor Christine O. Gregoire's Decision Not To Seek Reelection
June 13, 2011

I applaud Governor Gregoire for her decades of outstanding service to the people of Washington. From Seattle to Pullman, Gov. Gregoire has demonstrated relentless determination in her efforts to foster economic growth, strengthen the communities she serves, and improve the lives of millions of Americans. As a fierce advocate for American businesses, she continues to work tirelessly to promote American goods, open up new markets, and strengthen American businesses abroad. As chairwoman of the National Governors Association, Gov. Gregoire not only fosters strong bipartisanship among her colleagues, she helps build commonsense solutions to some of our Nation's toughest problems. Michelle and I, along with the people of Washington, will miss her outstanding leadership and thank her for her years of service.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Miami Beach, Florida
June 13, 2011

Thank you, everybody. It is wonderful to see you. Steve, to you and Dorothea, thank you for the incredibly gracious introduction and for opening up this extraordinary home. We really appreciate it.

To everybody who is here, all the cohosts who helped make this event happen, thank you. To Debbie Wasserman Schultz, thank you for letting me in your district. We love Debbie. She—if you're in the foxhole, you want Debbie alongside you, because not only is she charming and has that dazzling smile, but she's tough as nails. And that's what's needed during challenging times.

You know, when I was taking photographs, Steve mentioned—he said, "This must be really the toughest time to be President that I can recall." And Steve has known some Presidents. And what I told him was that there's no doubt that the country has gone through an extraordinary trauma. And there are a lot of folks here who remember my first campaign, that were big supporters during the first campaign. And we talked about the challenges that America had been going through for the previous decade: that job growth had been slow, that inequality was on the rise, that our school system had declined, that we didn't have an energy strategy that was appropriate for the 21st century.

All those challenges were worsened as a consequence of the financial crisis. And so people who were already struggling—middle class families who were already treading water and trying to figure out how to get by when their income and wages had flatlined, even though costs of everything from health care to college tuition to groceries and gas had gone up—they really took it even worse in the chin over the last couple of years.

And my job over these first 2 years has frankly been to clean up a big mess. And so working with Debbie, we were able to make sure that we yanked an economy out of what could have been a second Great Depression, that we stabilized the financial system. We made sure that we ended one war and started putting another war on the path where we could start bringing our troops home. We had to restore a sense around the world of what American values and ideals were all about. We had to make sure that we put in place sensible regulations in the financial system to ensure that another financial meltdown would not happen again. We had to address an auto industry that was on the verge of liquidation. We had to get the economy growing again, and we had to get jobs created again.

And I could not be prouder of the track record that we've put together under these trying

times. Over the last 15 months, we've created over 2 million jobs. The auto industry is now profitable for the first time in a decade and is actually hiring folks and producing cars that not just folks here in America, but all around the world want to buy. And they've paid back most of the money that they got from taxpayers because we had faith in the workers and the people who are producing cars there.

The financial system is now running again, although not as fast as we'd like, and the banks have paid back the money that we put in place because of the strong stewardship that we showed.

Along the way, we got a few other things done, like making sure that you could serve in our military no matter who you love. We made sure that young people could afford to go to college without amassing hundreds of thousands' worth of debt, because we made sure that subsidies that were going to the banks were now going directly to college students.

We appointed the first Latina to the Supreme Court, and we made sure that people get paid an equal day's pay for an equal day's work.

And so even in the midst of struggles, even in the midst of challenges, we were able to move that proactive agenda forward. But here's my main message to you today: We've still got a lot more work to do. We still have a lot more work to do.

We may have made the largest investment in green energy technology in our history, but we still don't have the kind of energy policy that would befit the greatest nation on Earth. We're still too dependent on foreign oil. We're seeing right now the effects of a spot oil market because we haven't thought through how we start freeing ourselves from dependence on foreign oil. And by the way, in the process, we have ended up financing folks who aren't particularly on our side on a whole range of issues. And so we've got to change course. That's work that remains to be done.

We still don't have a smart immigration policy in this country. It still doesn't make sense to think that we attract young people from all around the world to come here, study, get Ph.D.'s in engineering and math and science, and then we tell them, "Go home," instead of having them stay here and start businesses and create economic growth here in America; and allow people to live in the shadows, separating families, when we know that one of our strengths has been both a nation of—to be a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. We've got more work to do.

I could not be prouder of the work that we've done on health care, making sure that every American in this country can find affordable, accessible health care, which, by the way, will also end up saving us money, because if we've got a more efficient health care system, if we've got a smarter health care system that invests in things like preventive diseases, then we save all the money we're spending in the emergency room. And by the way, we give people some security and peace of mind.

But even though we passed the law, we've still got to implement it. And that's going to require us doing the hard work not just this year, not just next year, but over the next 5 years to make sure that that system is in place and we can start bending the cost curve on health care and save taxpayers money along the way.

We've still got to make sure that around the world, the progress that we've made over the last 2 years is not lost. And we've got to make sure that in certain areas that I know are of huge interest to the people of South Florida, that America is representing our best values and our best ideals.

In the Middle East, we will have to continue to be a stalwart ally of Israel, but we cannot give up on peace in the Middle East, because that's the only way that we can achieve full security.

Our neighbors in Haiti are still going to be depending on us to make sure that in the process of rebuilding, that we don't return to the bad governance that has plagued that country for so long, and that with a new government there, we're actually a partner with them to make sure that all the folks who were devastated by the earthquake are put in a position where they can finally live out their dreams.

Around the world, people are still looking to America for leadership. And we can provide

that leadership, but it starts at home. And so the most important thing we can do is make sure that we are doing the things that are necessary to grow this economy. I was just in—up in North Carolina meeting with my jobs council and some of the CEOs of some of the top businesses in the country. Intel and GE were there. And to a person, everybody said we have what it takes for America to grow and to prosper. What's preventing us right now is a lack of political will that can only be provided, I believe, by a strong Democratic Party and a Democrat in the White House. I believe that.

And the reason I believe it is because the last time we had a balanced budget, who was President? It was a Democratic President. The last time we had the kind of growth that lifted all boats, who was it? It was a Democratic President. And so for us to make the tough decisions that are required to start pulling down our deficit, getting a handle on our debt, but doing so in a way that continues to make investments in those things that have made America the land of opportunity—that's what this next election is going to be about. This is going to be a values debate. It's not just dry numbers, it's not just budgets. It's about who we are as a people, and do we still have a big, optimistic, bold, hopeful, compassionate, generous spirit, and is that reflected in how our Government operates.

I want an America where every young person who is willing to work hard knows that they can still make it, and that they're going to schools that teach them the skills they need to be the best workers in the world. And we're not there yet.

And I want an America where we've got the best infrastructure in the world, where we're not having to fly to Singapore—excuse me, Ambassador—or other places to see an airport that actually works or go to China to see high-speed rail. I want us to know that we can still do big things here in America.

I want an America in which we are still looking out for our seniors. And yes, we've got to make changes so that Medicare and Social Security are there for future generations. But we're not going to do it by privatizing it. We're not going to have to do it by voucherizing it. We're not going to do it by shifting costs onto folks who are the most vulnerable. We've got to do it in a way that shares the burdens for all people, because we all benefit from this extraordinary country. And obviously, no one has benefited more from the opportunities of this country than I have.

So when I see these young people who are sitting here, my question is: What kind of country are we going to be living—leaving them? Are we doing right by them? And I'm confident that we are in a position to do right by them, but we're going to have to work hard.

This process that began in 2008 is not done. When I stood there in Grant Park on that gorgeous night in November, I said to people, this is not the end, this is the beginning, and we have a steep hill to climb. I didn't know exactly how steep it was going to be. [*Laughter*] But I said we had a steep hill to climb. And we're just part of the way up that hill. We're going to have a lot more work to do.

And so for those of you who were involved in the campaign back in 2008 and you thought, boy, this is so exciting, and Obama is so fresh, and you had the posters and—[*laughter*]—now you look and you say, "Boy, the guy is—his hair is really gray now and"—[*laughter*]—"he's got a few bags under his eyes, and maybe my friends were all saying to me, 'Oh, I don't know, we thought the change would come faster and'"—I just want to remind you, big changes don't happen overnight.

This is a democracy that we live in. And that's—that is a wonderful thing, but it's messy and it's diverse, and it means there are going to be contentious arguments. And for those of you who think somehow that this period of time, things are more contentious or polarized than they've ever been, just look back at your history. I mean, we've had some big battles in this country around women's rights and worker's rights and civil rights and the shift from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy and huge issues of war and peace. It's always been contentious. That's part of what being a democracy is all about.

But I have never been more optimistic or more hopeful about what we can accomplish. And when I meet young people around the country, there's a spirit in them, a belief, a faith, a confidence, a can-do spirit that continues to inspire me and I hope inspires you.

So bottom line is this: Just as that night at Grant Park was the beginning, well, this is another beginning. And I want all of you to be just as geared up, just as fired up as you were 2½ years ago, as you were 3 years ago. If you are, I guarantee you, not only are we going to win in 2012, but more importantly, we're going to deliver the kind of country we want to our children and our grandchildren.

Thank you, everybody. Appreciate you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:23 p.m. at the residence of former U.S. Ambassador to Singapore Steven J. Green and his wife Dorothea. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Deborah Wasserman Schultz, chair, Democratic National Committee; Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonia M. Sotomayor; and former President William J. Clinton.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Miami, Florida
June 13, 2011

The President. Hello, Florida! Hello, Miami! It's good to see you. It is good to be back in Miami. Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Everybody have a seat. Have a seat.

What do you guys think of our new DNC chair? Debbie Wasserman Schultz, we are so thrilled to have her. You want Debbie on your side. She's a mom, she's got that cute smile and all that, but she is tough. Don't mess with Debbie. [*Laughter*] We are so glad of her leadership.

I know that a lot of folks have already been acknowledged. I want to make sure to mention Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi of Puerto Rico. Where is he? Pedro, are you still here? There he is right there.

Adrienne Arsht, thank you so much for everything that you've done for the civic life in Miami. Our Florida finance chair, Kirk Wager, is here. Founding cochair of Gen44, Andrew Korge, is here. Alonzo Mourning is in the house. And look, he's not from Miami, but he's got 11 championships, so I've got to mention Bill Russell is in the house. Bill Russell, greatest champion of all time in team sports in North America right here.

It is wonderful to be back. Many of you I've known for a very long time; some of you I'm getting a chance to see for the first time. And it got me thinking back to election night 2½ years ago in Grant Park. It was a beautiful night in Chicago, and everybody was feeling pretty good who had supported me. And it was an incredibly hopeful time. And you will recall—maybe you won't, but I'm going to remind you—[*laughter*]—I said, this is not the end, this is the beginning. This is the beginning.

Because what I said to the American people that night was that for almost a decade too many Americans had felt as if the American Dream was slipping away. We had seen economic growth and corporate profits and a stock market that had gone up, but there were too many folks who were struggling each and every day, working as hard as they could, being responsible for their families, being responsible to their communities, but somehow, they just couldn't keep up. Wages and incomes had flatlined, even though the cost of everything from health care to college tuitions to gas had all skyrocketed.

Around the world, the impression of America as a preeminent force for good had lost sway. We were in the midst of two wars. We didn't seem to be able to tackle challenges that had confronted us for decades: didn't have an energy plan that was worthy of the greatness of America; didn't have an immigration system that would allow us to be a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants; had a school system in which we had no longer—we were no longer at the top and weren't preparing our young people to meet the challenges and demands of the 21st-century global interdependent economy.

And so when I started the race for President, what I said to all of you was, if you're looking for easy answers, you're looking in the wrong place. If you're looking for just a bunch of partisan rhetoric, I'm probably not your guy. But if you want to join me on this journey, to make sure that America is living up to its ideals, if you wanted to reclaim that sense that in America anything is possible if we're willing to work for it, and if you wanted to see if we could get beyond some of the politics of the past and point towards the future, then I wanted you to be a part of this process. And so all that culminated in Grant Park that night.

But then I said, you know what, this just gives us the opportunity to do what's possible. This is not the end state. I didn't run for President just to be President. I ran for President to do things: to do big things, to do hard things.

What we didn't know at the time—I said this is going to be a steep climb to get to where we want to go, to achieve that summit. We didn't know how steep that climb was going to be because what we now know was we were already in the midst of what would turn out to be the worst recession since the Great Depression, came this close to a financial meltdown that would have spun the global financial system out of control.

We lost 4 million jobs in the 6 months before I was sworn in, and we'd lose another 4 [million]* before any of our economic initiatives had a chance to take effect. And all the challenges that ordinary families, working families, middle class families had been feeling for years were suddenly compounded. Folks were losing their jobs, losing their homes, didn't know what the future held.

And so we've spent the last 2½ years trying to heal this country, trying to mend what was broken. And with the help of people like Debbie and Pedro, we've made enormous strides. With the help of you, we have made enormous strides. I mean, think about it. An economy that was contracting is now growing. An economy that was shedding millions of jobs, we've seen over 2 million jobs created in the last 15 months, in the private sector. Financial system stabilized. And some of the decisions that we made were not popular. Everybody acts now like, well, yes, that was easy. [*Laughter*] Think about it.

Just think for a moment about the U.S. auto industry. We were on the verge of the liquidation of two of the three big automakers in the United States, Chrysler and GM. Now, there's been some revisionist history that's been offered lately about, well, they might have survived without our help, except nobody at GM or Chrysler believes that. They were going to break that up and sell off the spare parts. And as a consequence, you would have seen a million people, suppliers, dealerships, all gone, in the midst of this incredible hardship that people were already experiencing. And we made tough decisions, and we made the right decisions. And now we've got the Big Three automakers, all profitable, all increasing market share, hiring back workers.

And we didn't forget the promises that we had made during the campaign. We said we wanted to make sure that once again America would have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. And so in pursuit of that goal, we said let's stop subsidizing big banks as middlemen on the student loan program. Let's take back billions of dollars and give it directly to young people so that millions of children—million of our kids are going to be able to go to college without $100,000 or $200,000 worth of debt.

We said we're going to start building a genuine clean energy industry in this country and made the largest investment in clean energy in our history. And we did that. We said that we'd begin the process of rebuilding our infrastructure in this country and made the largest investment rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our ports since Eisenhower built the Interstate Highway System in the 1950s, putting hundreds of thousands of people to work all across America, doing the work that needs to be done.

* White House correction.

We said we had to finally, after generations, deal with the travesty of the richest nation on Earth having people who went bankrupt because they went sick and couldn't afford to provide health care to their families, and we passed a historic health care law that is going to make sure that everybody in this country can get health care and is going to help drive prices down on health care in the bargain. We promised we'd do that, and we did it.

Oh, and along the way, we did a few other things, like pass equal pay for equal work legislation, and make sure that never again will you be barred from serving your country in uniform just because of the person that you love. And we appointed two women to the Supreme Court, one of them the first Latina in our history. And we expanded national service so that our young people would know what it means to give back to this country.

And we passed financial regulatory reform so that not only would we not see a reprise of the financial shenanigans that had gone on before, but we'd actually have a consumer bureau that would be able to look after folks when they take out credit cards and they take out mortgages so that they wouldn't be cheated.

And on the international front, we said we would end the war in Iraq, and we have ended combat operations in Iraq and will be bringing our troops home this year. And we said that we would start refocusing our efforts in Afghanistan, and especially go after Al Qaida—and we went after Al Qaida, and we're going after Al Qaida—and beginning the transition process so that Afghans can take responsibility for their security.

And in the meantime, we dealt with a few other things, like pirates—[*laughter*]—and pandemic and oil spills. So there were a few other things that kept us occupied.

And I describe all this not for us to be complacent, but for all of us to remember that as hard as these battles have been, as much resistance as we've gotten, as much as the political debate has been distorted at times, that our basic premise, the idea that when we put our minds to it, there's nothing America can't do, that's been proven. That's been borne out. We have the evidence. We've brought about amazing change over the last 2½ years.

And we couldn't have done it without you.

Audience member. Keep your promise; stop AIDS now!

The President. We couldn't—we could not——

Audience members. Keep your promise; stop AIDS now! Keep your promise; stop AIDS now!

The President. That's all right. That's all right. We're good. We're good.

Audience members. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Hold up. Hold up.

So—now, here's the thing. The reason we're here today is because our work is not done. For all the progress we've made, our work is not complete. We're not at the summit. We just—we're just part way up the mountain. There's more to do. There is more to do.

We still don't have the kind of energy policy that America needs, and all of you experience that at the pump each and every day. Our economy is still vulnerable to the spot oil market and us having to import billions of dollars, when we could be not only producing more energy right here at home, but we could be producing energy that's clean and renewable and that would ensure that we could pass on the kind of planet to the next generation that all of us long for.

We know that we're not done when it comes to issues like immigration reform. I was down here at Miami Dade, an amazing institution that embodies what America is all about. Young people who can trace their heritage to 181 different countries were represented. And some of you who may not be familiar with the ceremony, what they do is they bring out the flags of each country where somebody can trace their roots. And everybody cheers. The Cuban flag comes up, and everybody goes crazy. The Jamaican flag comes up, and everybody is hooting and hollering. See, sort of just like this.

But then there's one flag that comes up, and that is the American flag, and everybody explodes, because that's the essence of who we are: Out of many, one. But we don't have a system that reflects those values. It is still an issue

that's exploited, that's used to divide instead of bringing people together. We've got more work to do.

We've got more work to do when it comes to rebuilding the infrastructure of this country. We've got a couple of trillion dollars' worth of work that needs to be done. We were at a jobs council meeting up in North Carolina, and the chairman of Southwest—the CEO of Southwest, he explained how, because our air traffic control system is so archaic, we probably waste about 15 percent of fuel because planes are having to go this way and that. The whole system was designed back in the 1930s before you even had things like GPS. But think about—what's true for the airlines industry is true for our roads, it's true for our ports, it's true for our airports, it's true for our power system. We've got more work to do.

We've made incredible progress on education, helping students to finance their college educations, but we still don't have enough engineers. We still don't have enough scientists. We still lag behind other countries when it comes to training our young people for the jobs, the high-skilled jobs that are going to provide high wages and allow them to support a family.

But we've made incredible progress, K through 12, with something we call Race to the Top, which basically says to school districts and to States, you reform the system and we will show you the money, and so providing incentives. And 40 States across the country have made critical reforms as a consequence to this program. But we still have schools where half the kids drop out. We still consign too many of our young people to lives of desperation and despair. We've got more work to do.

And we've got so much work to do on our economy. We've got so much more work to do on our economy. Every night I get letters. We get about 40,000 pieces of mail at the White House every day, and I ask my team to select 10 letters for me to read that are representative of what people are feeling out there. And I will tell you these really are representative, because about half of them call me an idiot. [*Laughter*] And—but most of the stories are just some ordinary folks who have done the right thing, have worked hard all their lives. Some of them are small-business owners who have poured their savings into a venture, and then when the recession hit, they lost everything. And now they're trying to get back on their feet.

You get letters from moms who are trying to figure out how to pay their bills at the end of the month, and they're going back to school while they're working to see if they can retrain for a better job. Sometimes you get folks who have sent out 100 résumés and haven't gotten a response and are trying to describe what it's like to tell your child that nobody wants to hire you. Sometimes, you get a letter from a kid who says: "My parents are about to lose my home. Mr. President, is there something you can do to help?"

And in all those stories, what you see is incredible resilience and incredible stick-to-itness and a sense on the part of people that no matter how down they are, they're not out. And they don't expect government to solve all their problems. All they're looking for is that somebody cares and that we're doing everything we can, trying every idea to make sure that this economy is moving. And they don't understand how it is that good ideas get caught up in partisan politics, and why is it that people seem to be arguing all the time instead of trying to do the people's business.

So we've got more work to do, investing in our education system and making sure that our infrastructure is built and we're putting people back to work and helping the housing market recover and dealing with our budget in a way that allows us to once again live within our means, but doing so in a way that is consistent with our values.

You know, this budget debate that we're having in Washington right now, it's not just about numbers. It's about values. It's about what we believe and who we are as a people. The easiest thing to do to balance a budget is you just slash and burn and you cut and you don't worry about the consequences. But that's not who we are. We're better than that.

I don't want to live in a country where we're no longer helping young people go to college,

and so your fate is basically determined by where you were born and your circumstances. If that were the case, I wouldn't be standing here today. I don't want to live in a country where we no longer believe that we can build the best airports or the best rail systems. I don't want to live in a country where we're no longer investing in basic research and science so that we're at the cutting edge of technology. I don't want to live in a country where we are abandoning our commitment to the most vulnerable among us—the disabled, our seniors—making sure that they've got a basic safety net so that they can live with dignity and respect in their golden years.

And so here's—the good news is that we can bring down our deficit and we can work down our debt, and we can do so the same way families all across America do, by prioritizing and deciding what's important to us. So we're going to have to scrub the Federal budget and get rid of every program that doesn't work and get rid of every regulation that is outdated. And we've got to make sure that we build on all the tax cuts that we've provided to small businesses and to individuals over the last couple years so that they're getting back on their feet.

But we've also got to make sure that whatever sacrifices we make, whatever burdens are borne are spread among all of us; that we're not just doing it on the backs of the poor; that we're not just doing it on the backs of our seniors; that we're not just doing it on the backs of the most vulnerable.

And the other side say, well, you know what, we can just cut and cut and cut and cut, and by the way, you, Mr. President, since you've been so lucky, we're going to give you a $200,000 tax break. I'd love to have a tax break. I don't like paying taxes. I'm the President. [*Laughter*] This notion somehow that I enjoy paying taxes or administering taxes, that makes no sense. Nothing is better for a politician than saying, you know what, forget about it, you will have everything you need and everything this country needs, and you don't have to pay for a thing.

But you know what, I don't want a $200,000 tax break if it means that 33 seniors are each going to have to pay $6,000 more a year for their Medicare. I don't want that. I don't want a tax break if it means hundreds of kids won't be able to go to Head Start. That's not a tradeoff I'm willing to make. That's not a tradeoff most Americans are willing to make. That's not who we are. That's not what we believe in.

And the reason I'm not willing to make that tradeoff, it's not out of charity. It's because my life is better when I know, as I'm driving by a school, you know what, those kids in there, they've got the best teachers, they've got the best equipment. I know that they're going to succeed. That makes me feel better about my life and about my country.

And if I'm seeing an elderly couple stroll by holding hands—and I'm saying to myself, you know, that's going to be Michelle and me in a few years—and I know that whatever their circumstances, I know they've got Social Security and they've got Medicare that they can count on, that makes my life better. That makes my life richer.

So that's what this campaign is going to be about. It's going to be about values. It's the same thing that the 2008 campaign was about. What's important to you? Who are we? What is it about America that makes us so proud?

When I think about why our campaign drew so much excitement, it was because it tapped into those essential things that bind us together. I look out at this auditorium, and I see people from every walk of life, every age, every demographic, but there's something that binds us together, that says this is what makes our country so special.

And that's what's at stake. That's the journey that we're on. And the only way that we stay on track, the only way that we continue that journey, is if all of you are involved. Because what also made the campaign special was it wasn't about me—it was never about me—it was about us. It was about you. It was about you being willing to be involved and you being willing to be engaged. Because that's also what makes America special: ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

Now, 2½ years have passed since that night in Grant Park, and I've got a lot more gray hair. [*Laughter*] And what seemed so fresh and

new, now—we've seen Obama so many times on TV, and we know all his quirks and all his tics, and he's been poked apart. And there's some of you who probably have felt at times during the last 2½ years, gosh, why isn't this happening faster? Why isn't this easier? Why are we struggling? And why didn't health care get done quicker? And why didn't we get the public option? [*Laughter*] And what—I know the conversation you guys are having: "I'm not feeling as hopeful as I was." And I understand that. There have been frustrations, and I've got some dings to show for it over the last 2½ years.

But I never said this was going to be easy. This is a democracy. It's a big country and a diverse country. And our political process is messy. Yes, you don't always get 100 percent of what you want, and you make compromises. That's how the system was designed. But what I hope all of you still feel is that for all the frustrations, for all the setbacks, for all the occasional stumbles, that what motivates us, what we most deeply cherish, that that's still within reach. That it's still possible to bring about extraordinary change. That it's still possible to make sure that the America we pass down to our kids and our grandkids is a better America than the one we inherited. I'm confident about that. I believe in that because I believe in you.

And so I'm glad you guys came to the rally. But just like in 2008, if we want to bring about the change we believe in, we're going to have to get to work. You're going to have to make phone calls. You're going to have to knock on doors. You're going to have to talk to all your friends and all your neighbors, and you're going to have to talk to the naysayers. And you're going to have to go out there and say: We've got more work to do. And if they tell you, I don't know, I'm not sure, I'm not convinced, you just remind them of those three words that captured this campaign—captured the last campaign and will capture the 2012 campaign: Yes, we can.

Thank you, Miami. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 p.m. at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County. In his remarks, he referred to philanthropist Adrienne Arsht; Alonzo Mourning, former center, National Basketball Association's Miami Heat; William F. Russell, former center, NBA's Boston Celtics; Supreme Court Associate Justices Sonia M. Sotomayor and Elena Kagan; and Gary C. Kelly, chief executive officer, Southwest Airlines Co.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Miami
June 13, 2011

The President. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Everybody please have a seat, have a seat.

I am among a lot of friends here tonight, and it is just wonderful to be back in Miami. I'm sorry about the Heat. [*Laughter*] You know, but my Bulls didn't get there either. We'll be back—both of our teams will be back in the Eastern Conference finals, and one of our teams will win the finals next year. And I'll just leave it at that. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank J.P. and Maggie for opening up their incredible home. And to their daughters, thank you guys for letting us crash your pad here. [*Laughter*] I told J.P. and Maggie that I am big on daughters, as you might imagine, and I think having such poised young ladies, that reflects very well on Mom. [*Laughter*] We don't really have anything to do with it. All we can do is screw it up. [*Laughter*]

But they have hosted Michelle here as well, and I said that they're just going to have to do with me tonight, because anybody who's had a chance to spend time with Michelle knows who the real star of the family is.

We have gone through an incredible journey over the last 2½ years. And many of you were with me very early in that journey when people couldn't pronounce my name. And when I think back to that night in Grant Park when it was clear that I had won the Presidency, and it

was a night of such hope and such promise, I tried to warn people—I explained to them, this isn't the end; this is just the beginning.

I knew that we had gone through a decade in which hard decisions had been put off again and again and again on critical issues like health care and energy and immigration. And I also knew that for a decade, families all across America had struggled. Even though the economy was growing and the stock market was booming and corporate profits were high, ordinary folks had seen their wages and their incomes flatlined and were barely able to keep up with the costs of everything from health care to college tuition, to gas prices.

And so we knew that we were going to have to take on some structural challenges domestically, and then we had a whole range of international issues, from two wars to try to restore America's luster in the world. And we weren't going to be able to do it in a day or a week or a year or maybe even not in one term. What I said to people was, I promise you if you stick with it, if hope isn't just a slogan, but an attitude that we carry forward every day no matter what the struggles are, no matter how hard things seem, that we can make incredible progress.

And I think the last 2½ years have vindicated that faith and that confidence that I had, primarily in the American people. Now, we didn't know how hard the path was going to be at the time. It was only after I had been sworn in that we realized that, in fact, we had lost 4 million jobs in the 6 months before and that we would lose another 4 million jobs in the few months after I had been elected, before we had a chance to put any of our economic policies in place.

So we had to hit the ground running and do everything we could to prevent a second Great Depression and to make sure that the auto industry didn't collapse and to make sure that the financial system stabilized and not lose sight of those deeper, more fundamental structural issues that had to be attended to.

And we did that. An economy that was shrinking is now growing again. Over the last 15 months, we've created more than 2 million jobs. The financial system is stable. Corporations are making profits. And so the immediate crisis was averted. And oftentimes we had to make some pretty unpopular decisions to do that.

I was mentioning at a previous rally, there's been some revisionist history lately where some folks don't remember how unpopular the auto bailout was. Some folks say, in fact, it might not have been necessary; Chrysler and GM would have done fine without it. But the fact of the matter is, is that we were on the verge of seeing a liquidation that would have cost a million jobs and might have been a death knell to American manufacturing.

And so we made those decisions, but as I said, what was key was making sure that we didn't lose sight of those more fundamental questions that had been put off for too long. And so we took on health care, knowing that it was going to be unpopular, but also knowing it was the right thing to do. And as a consequence, 30 million more people are going to have health care, and people who've got kids with preexisting conditions know that they're going to be served. And we've got a chance to start bending the cost curve so that a health care system that is probably the least efficient and most wasteful of any health care system in the developed world can finally start working the way it should.

We decided that we were going to take on the financial regulatory system to make sure not only that we didn't have another meltdown, but that we actually made it work for consumers better. And that's caused a little fuss on Wall Street. But it was the right thing to do. And we got it done.

We said that we've got to start investing in clean energy because as long as we are vulnerable to a system in which we have 2 percent of the world's oil reserves, but we use 25 percent of the world's oil, we'll never have our economy on a firm footing, not to mention the environmental consequences of continuing to rely on fossil fuels. And so we made the largest investment in clean energy in our history.

And while we were at it, we made the largest investment in infrastructure since Dwight Eisenhower, because we understood that it

was important for us to start rebuilding our bridges and our ports and our airports and our roads so that we can attract companies who want to locate here in the United States of America.

Along the way, we passed equal pay for equal work. We made sure that we had two feisty women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina. We made sure that we finally applied rule of law to the fight against terrorism and that basic principles like due process were observed.

And then around the world, we started the hard work of restoring America's luster: ending the war in Iraq, creating the circumstances where we can begin transitioning troops out of Afghanistan, going after Al Qaida, making sure that we responded in Haiti and Japan in ways that no other country around the world can respond, rebuilding our alliances.

So we've been busy. That doesn't count the pirates, the pandemic—[*laughter*]—the oil spills.

Audience member. Bin Laden.

The President. Bin Laden, yes, that was another thing we did.

I make these points just to say that our record of accomplishment over the last 2½ years, with the help of people like Debbie Wasserman Schultz, who's here today—[*inaudible*]—that the progress we've made has been remarkable. But I'm also here to say we've got so much more work to do. Our task is not finished. We did not attain the summit on election night, and we didn't attain it halfway through my first term in office. This is hard work.

So we've got more work to do. We've got to implement health care reform. We've got to make sure that financial regulatory reform works the way it's supposed to. We haven't reformed our immigration system so that we are a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants and we can attract the best and the brightest to our shores, which has always been a foundational strength of the United States. Our energy policy still is just a hodgepodge, and for all the progress we've made, we're not where we need to be in making sure that this is an energy-efficient economy that is running on all cylinders.

We made a huge investment in basic research and science and a huge investment in making sure that our young people get the best education possible, but we still don't have enough engineers and scientists, and our young people are still not performing at the levels they need to in order to compete in a 21st-century economy.

And so we've got a lot more work to do. Our court systems are still suffering from a backlog of appointments and a dysfunctional confirmation process that is going to be an ongoing project over the next 4 or 5 years.

And so those things that we care most deeply about, those values that the people in this room share, we're still fighting for them. And most importantly, we're still fighting for an economy that works for ordinary Americans. And that means making sure that we are living within our means and we've got a budget that is sustainable, but it means making the hard choices so that we're still investing in our kids, we're still investing in schools, we're still investing in science and research, we're still doing what we need to do to win the future.

This battle that we're having about a budget right now, that's—it's not just about numbers. It is about values and ideals and who we are and what we care about and whether this is still a big, generous, bold country where we say we don't have to sacrifice taking care of our seniors and our disabled in order for us to get our budget in shape. We can make different priorities, and we can make sure that those of us who've benefited most from this society, that we're giving a little something back so that we achieve fiscal discipline in a way that's balanced and fair and true to who we are.

So the bottom line is that for those of you who were feeling pretty good on election day and feel like you did your part, we're signing you back up. [*Laughter*] You've got more work to do. This is my last campaign, so I'm going to put everything I've got into it. I have been so blessed to have the privilege of being President of the United States, but as I mentioned earlier tonight, I didn't run for President just to be

President. Frankly, Michelle would have been happy if I had just kept on teaching and writing books. And the girls, they're happy wherever they go; they are just thriving. The reason we're going to put ourselves through this thing one more time, because our job's not finished, and I believe in finishing something that we started.

But I'm going to need your help. The only way that we're going to be able to assure that we are passing on to this next generation the America that we believe in is if we are putting our shoulder to the wheel one more time. And one thing we discovered in 2008, when we put our shoulder to the wheel, when all of us together, collectively, fight for what we believe in, what we hold most dear, what we hold in common, our deepest values and ideals, nobody can stop us. Nobody can stop us.

So I mentioned to the group earlier, I'm a little grayer than I was in 2008. [*Laughter*] It's not as cool to be an Obama supporter as it was in 2008, with the posters and all that stuff. [*Laughter*] But the values that motivated me haven't changed, and I hope they haven't changed for you either. And if we do our part, then I think 2012 will just be an extension of what we started in 2008 and we can look back with great pride about what we accomplished, because I think we will be able to right this ship and make sure that America is heading for a brighter day.

So thanks very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:51 p.m. at the residence of Jean-Philippe and Magalie Austin. In his remarks, he referred to Stefanie, Jessica, Adele, and Natalie Austin, daughters of Jean-Philippe and Magalie Austin; and Supreme Court Associate Justices Sonia M. Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony in San Juan, Puerto Rico
June 14, 2011

Buenas tardes! Ah, it is good to be back in Puerto Rico. It is great to see so many familiar faces, so many advocates for the island. First of all, I want to acknowledge Congressman Pierluisi is here. Where is he? Right over there. My great friend Andres Lopez, Francisco Pavia, Senator Bhatia, Governor Fortuno, and I know that we've got some former Governors here today, along with leaders of local parties and of the House and the Senate.

I am so grateful for the unbelievable reception. As you know, the last President to come to San Juan and address the people of Puerto Rico was John F. Kennedy, nearly 50 years ago. Now, at the time, I was about 4 months old—[*laughter*]—so my memory of this visit is a little hazy. What I do remember is that when I came here to campaign, I promised that I would return as President of the United States. And although my hair is a little grayer than during my first visit, I am glad to be able to keep that promise to the people of Puerto Rico.

But this is only one part of my commitment to families here on the island. Because when I ran for President, I promised to include Puerto Rico not just on my itinerary, but also in my vision of where our country needs to go. And I am proud to say that we've kept that promise too.

First of all, we've addressed the question of political status. In March, a report from our Presidential task force on Puerto Rican status provided a meaningful way forward on this question so that the residents of the island can determine their own future. And when the people of Puerto Rico make a clear decision, my administration will stand by you.

I also know that there are plenty of other issues that the island is facing. When President Kennedy was here, he addressed the relationship between Washington and San Juan, and he also spoke about tackling what he called "the difficult problems of education and housing and employment."

In that same spirit, we've been trying to make sure that every family on the island can find work and make a living and provide for their children. That's why our economic plan

and our health care reform included help for Puerto Rico.

That's why we're increasing access to broadband and investing in education. That's why we're helping to grow local tourism and health care and clean energy industry. We're giving Puerto Ricans the tools they need to build their own economic futures.

And this is how it should be. Because every day, *Boricuas* help write the American story. Puerto Rican artists contribute to our culture. And by the way, I don't know if you noticed, but Marc Anthony decided to show up here today. Puerto Rican entrepreneurs create American jobs. Even in the NBA finals, J.J. Barea inspired all of us with those drives to the hoop. That guy can play. Next time I'm down here, I'm going to have to—next time I'm here, I'm going to have to play some hoops.

I also want to take a moment to acknowledge all the Puerto Rican men and women who serve in our country's uniform. Give it up for our veterans. Thank you.

You know, one of those veterans is Juan Castillo. Juan fought in World War II, and he fought in the Korean war. Today, he's 2 months away from his 101st birthday. Juan's legacy is carried on by Puerto Ricans in Iraq and Afghanistan, men and women like Chief Master Sergeant Ramon Colon-Lopez of the United States Air Force. In 2004, Ramon's team was going after a high-value target in Afghanistan. His helicopter was seriously damaged by hostile fire. In the thick of battle, he didn't know how large the force that he was up against. But he pressed on anyway, and his team killed or captured 12 enemy fighters. Because of his bravery, he was the first Hispanic American to be awarded the Air Force Combat Action Medal.

And I tell this story because for decades, Puerto Ricans like Juan and Ramon have put themselves in harm's way for a simple reason: They want to protect the country that they love. Their willingness to serve, their willingness to sacrifice, is as American as apple pie—or as *arroz con gandules*. The aspirations and the struggles on this island mirror those across America.

So I know that today a lot of folks are asking some of the same questions here on the island as they're asking in Indiana or California or in Texas: How do I make sure my kids get the kind of education that they need? How can I put away a little money for retirement? How can I fill up my gas tank? How can I pay the bills?

Everywhere I go, I see families facing challenges like these, but they're facing them with resolve and determination. You know, these problems didn't develop overnight here in Puerto Rico or anywhere else, but that means we're not going to solve them overnight. But day by day, step by step, we will solve them.

We are going to be able to improve our education system here in Puerto Rico and all across America. We are making strides to improve our health care system here in Puerto Rico and all across America. We are going to put people back to work here in Puerto Rico and all across America.

Maybe some of you remember that when I was here in 2008, I spoke in front of the Cuartel de Ballaja, a site that had been home to so many chapters of Puerto Rican history. Today, Puerto Rican workers are writing the next chapter by turning the building into a model of energy efficiency. They're making HVAC systems more efficient. They're putting on a green roof. They're installing 720 photovoltaic panels. When they're done, it's estimated that the energy savings will be 57 percent. And Puerto Rico will have taken one more step towards creating a clean energy economy.

Those are the kinds of steps it will take for Puerto Rico to win the future and for America to win the future. That's what we do in this country. With each passing decade, with each new challenge, we reinvent ourselves. We find new ways to solve our problems. We push forward.

And we do so in a way that gives every one of our people a shot at the dream that we all share; the dream that if you're willing to work hard and take responsibility, you can build a better life for your family. You can find a job that's secure, provides decent wages, provides for your children, provides for your retirement.

That's what people are hoping for, and it's not too much to ask.

Puerto Rico, I don't need to tell you that we're not there yet. We're not where we need to be. But in these challenging times, people on this island don't quit. We don't turn back. People in America don't quit. We don't turn back. We place our bets on entrepreneurs and on workers and on our families. We understand that there is strength in our diversity. We renew the American Dream. We have done it before. We will do it again.

Muchas gracias. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you, Puerto Rico.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:43 a.m. at the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Andres Lopez, member, Democratic National Committee; Francisco Pavia, delegate, 2008 Democratic National Convention; Commonwealth Sen. Eduardo Bhatia and Gov. Luis G. Fortuno of Puerto Rico; musician Marc Anthony; and Jose J. Barea, point guard, National Basketball Association's Dallas Mavericks.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Actions and Policies of Certain Members of the Government of Belarus and Other Persons To Undermine Belarus Democratic Processes or Institutions

June 14, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Belarus are to continue in effect beyond June 16, 2011.

The flawed December 2010 Presidential election in Belarus and its aftermath—the harsh violence against peaceful demonstrators; the continuing detention, prosecution, and imprisonment of opposition Presidential candidates and others; and the continuing repression of independent media and civil society activists—all show that the Government of Belarus has taken steps backward in the development of democratic governance and respect for human rights. The actions and policies of the Government of Belarus and other persons to undermine Belarus democratic processes or institutions, to commit human rights abuses related to political repression, and to engage in public corruption pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared to deal with this threat and the related measures blocking the property of certain persons.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
June 14, 2011.

NOTE: The message referred to opposition Presidential candidates Vladimir Neklyaev, Andrei Sannikov, Vital Rymasheuski, Nikolai Statkevich, and Dmitry Uss of Belarus. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at an Event Honoring Military Fathers and Their Children
June 15, 2011

Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. I am going to be really quick because I understand you guys have been hearing too many speeches and you're here to see the movie.

So the—first of all, I want to say thanks to Jason and to Jack and Mary Frances for not only the great introduction, but also for your incredible service—your family—and the incredible service you've rendered to the First Lady, who could not be more thrilled about the work you've done.

I am extremely pleased to be here. I'm glad to have Disney's Roshon Fegan here. Thank you very much, Roshon, for the great work you've done. Disney's ambassador, Jennifer Mason, thank you.

I wanted to invite you all here first and foremost just to say thank you. Thank you for your service. Thank you for your dedication. And when I say thank you, it's not just to those in uniform; it's to the families as well who are also serving. We could not be more proud of you, and we are grateful because you help not only keep us secure, but also keep us free. So we're grateful for that.

The second reason I'm here is because I'm a dad. And across the country, one of the things that we've been trying to do is to stress the importance of fatherhood. We've hosted town halls, we've supported local programs, we've reached out to over 10,000 dads through our fatherhood pledge. For those fathers who may have trouble living up to their responsibilities, we're trying to give them some support, but also give them a strong nudge to understand how important they are in the lives of their families.

This year we're launching something new. We call it Year of Strong Fathers and Strong Families. And the idea is simple: We're working with organizations to help dads connect with their kids in simple, meaningful ways. So bowling proprietors are going to give a free game of bowling to dads and their kids. Those of you who are better bowlers than me, please give me some tips. [*Laughter*] It's always good laughs from my kids when they see me out bowling.

The Zoos and Aquariums Association is going to be helping dads take their kids to the zoos. Major League Baseball, the WNBA, other sports leagues are promoting fatherhood involvement. Even LivingSocial and Groupon are discounting activities and outings for fathers and kids. So you can find out more about all this stuff at fatherhood.gov. Fatherhood.gov.

We're also, today, kicking off a summer-long partnership with Disney. We are so proud of what they do. Disney, in partnership with the First Lady's Joining Forces initiative, is going to be hosting movie screenings at military bases across the country. And this partnership with Disney will give an opportunity for military families to spend some time together, have fun, and provide a brief respite from all the incredible responsibilities you guys carry out.

So bottom line is this: We're proud of you. We are grateful to you. Dads, happy Father's Day in advance. For the families, please know that we understand that you're serving right alongside anybody in uniform, and that's why the First Lady and Dr. Jill Biden have made such a big priority on military families. This is just one small way that we can say thank you to all of you. All right?

God bless you. God bless America. Enjoy the movie, "Cars 2." See you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:49 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Col. Jason Dempsey, USA, 10th Mountain Division, and his children Jack and Mary Frances; actor Roshon Fegan; Jennifer Mason, world ambassador, Disney, Inc.; and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Global Deployments of United States Combat-Equipped Armed Forces
June 15, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of U.S. Armed Forces equipped for combat.

MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST AL-QA'IDA, THE TALIBAN, AND ASSOCIATED FORCES AND IN SUPPORT OF RELATED U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM OBJECTIVES

Since October 7, 2001, the United States has conducted combat operations in Afghanistan against al-Qa'ida terrorists and their Taliban supporters. In support of these and other overseas operations, the United States has deployed combat-equipped forces to a number of locations in the U.S. Central, Pacific, European, Southern, and Africa Command areas of operation. Previously such operations and deployments have been reported, consistent with Public Law 107–40 and the War Powers Resolution, and operations and deployments remain ongoing. These operations, which the United States has carried out with the assistance of numerous international partners, have been successful in seriously degrading al-Qa'ida's capabilities and brought an end to the Taliban's leadership of Afghanistan.

United States Armed Forces are also actively pursuing and engaging remaining al-Qa'ida and Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. The total number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan is approximately 99,000, of which more than 83,000 are assigned to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The U.N. Security Council most recently reaffirmed its authorization of ISAF for a 12-month period from October 13, 2010, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1943 (October 13, 2010). The mission of ISAF, under NATO command and in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, is to conduct population-centric counterinsurgency operations, enable expanded and effective capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces, support improved governance and development in order to protect the Afghan people, and promote sustainable security. Including the United States, 48 partner nations, including all 28 NATO Allies, contribute troops to ISAF. These combat operations are gradually pushing insurgents to the edges of secured population areas in a number of important regions, largely resulting from the increase in U.S. forces over the past 2 years. United States and other coalition forces will continue to execute the strategy of clear-hold-build, and transition, until full responsibility for security rests with the Afghan National Security Forces.

The United States continues to detain approximately 1,000 al-Qa'ida, Taliban, and associated force fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests.

The combat-equipped forces, deployed since January 2002 to Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, continue to conduct secure detention operations for the approximately 170 detainees at Guantanamo Bay under Public Law 107–40 and consistent with principles of the law of war.

In furtherance of U.S. efforts against members of al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and associated forces, the United States continues to work with partners around the globe, with a particular focus on the U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility. In this context, the United States has deployed U.S. combat-equipped forces to assist in enhancing the counterterrorism capabilities of our friends and allies, including special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations around the world. The United States is committed to

thwarting the efforts of al-Qa'ida and its associated forces to carry out future acts of international terrorism, and we have continued to work with our counterterrorism partners to disrupt and degrade the capabilities of al-Qa'ida and its associated forces. As necessary, in response to the terrorist threat, I will direct additional measures against al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and associated forces to protect U.S. citizens and interests. It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployments of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter this terrorist threat to the United States. A classified annex to this report provides further information.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

Since the expiration of the authorization and mandate for the Multinational Force in Iraq in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1790 on December 31, 2008, U.S. forces have continued operations to support Iraq in its efforts to maintain security and stability in Iraq, pursuant to the bilateral Agreement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Iraq on the Withdrawal of United States Forces from Iraq and the Organization of Their Activities during Their Temporary Presence in Iraq (Security Agreement), which entered into force on January 1, 2009. These contributions have included, but have not been limited to, assisting in building the capability of the Iraqi security forces, supporting the development of Iraq's political institutions, enhancing the capacity of the ministries of Defense and Interior, providing critical humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the Iraqis, and supporting the U.S. diplomatic mission. The United States continues its responsible drawdown, in accordance with commitments in the Security Agreement, to withdraw U.S. forces from Iraq by December 31, 2011. The number of U.S. forces in Iraq at this time is approximately 45,000.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN LIBYA

As I reported on March 21, and at my direction, consistent with a request from the Arab League, and as authorized by the United Nations Security Council under the provisions of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973, U.S. military forces commenced operations on March 19, 2011, to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe and address the threat posed to international peace and security by the crisis in Libya and to protect the people of Libya from the Qadhafi regime. The initial phase of U.S. military involvement in Libya was conducted under the command of the U.S. Africa Command. By April 4, however, the United States had transferred responsibility for the military operations in Libya to NATO and the U.S. involvement has assumed a supporting role in the coalition's efforts. Since April 4, U.S. participation has consisted of: (1) non-kinetic support to the NATO-led operation, including intelligence, logistical support, and search and rescue assistance; (2) aircraft that have assisted in the suppression and destruction of air defenses in support of the no-fly zone; and (3) since April 23, precision strikes by unmanned aerial vehicles against a limited set of clearly defined targets in support of the NATO-led coalition's efforts. Although we are no longer in the lead, U.S. support for the NATO-based coalition remains crucial to assuring the success of international efforts to protect civilians and civilian populated areas from the actions of the Qadhafi regime, and to address the threat to international peace and security posed by the crisis in Libya. With the exception of operations to rescue the crew of a U.S. aircraft on March 21, 2011, the United States has deployed no ground forces to Libya.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN EGYPT

On January 31, a security force of approximately 40 U.S. military personnel from the U.S. Central Command deployed to Cairo. Although this security force was equipped for combat, this movement was undertaken solely for the purpose of protecting American citizens and property. A security force remains deployed to the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and will remain through July 4, or until the security situation becomes such that it is no longer needed, if earlier. This security force is separate

from, and in addition to, the approximately 693 military personnel that constitute the U.S. contingent of the Multinational Force & Observers present in Egypt since 1981.

MARITIME INTERCEPTION OPERATIONS

As noted in previous reports, the United States continues to conduct maritime interception operations on the high seas in the areas of responsibility of each of the geographic combatant commands. These maritime operations are aimed at stopping the movement, arming, and financing of certain international terrorist groups. A classified annex to this report provides further information.

U.S./NATO OPERATIONS IN KOSOVO

The U.N. Security Council authorized Member States to establish a NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) in Resolution 1244 on June 10, 1999. The original mission of KFOR was to monitor, verify, and, when necessary, enforce compliance with the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (now Serbia), while maintaining a safe and secure environment. Today, KFOR deters renewed hostilities and, with local authorities and international institutions, contributes to the maintenance of a safe and secure environment.

Currently, 22 NATO Allies contribute to KFOR. Eight non-NATO countries also participate. The United States contribution to KFOR is approximately 800 U.S. military personnel out of the total strength of approximately 6,000 personnel. The principal military task of KFOR forces is to help maintain a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in all of these operations pursuant to my constitutional and statutory authority as Commander in Chief (including the authority to carry out Public Law 107–40 and other statutes) and as Chief Executive, as well as my statutory and constitutional authority, to conduct the foreign relations of the United States. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Daniel K. Inouye, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks at the Congressional Picnic
June 15, 2011

Hello, everybody! Welcome to the White House. First of all, I take full responsibility for the weather. [*Laughter*] What a spectacular day for a congressional picnic. This is always one of the best events of the year for us, mainly because with all the work that we do with Members of Congress and their staffs, all too often, we don't get a chance to say thank you to the families.

And we understand that public service is tough on the families, in some ways tougher. You've got spouses who are away from home, moms or dads or grandpas or grandmas who don't get a chance to see you as often as they'd like. And so this is just one modest way for us to say to all of you, thank you for the enormous contributions you make to the country. We are thrilled with everything that you guys do each and every day to make this country stronger and more secure and more free.

It is good to see a lot of familiar faces here. I hope everybody's getting enough to eat. We don't want to make a long speech, but I do hope that the spirit of community that is so evident on a day like today, that this carries over each and every day. We've got Democrats here and Republicans here, and we all have differences on issues at any given moment, but the

one thing that we have to remind ourselves every day is we're all Americans and we're all part of the American family.

So finally, the last point I'd make is we've got some servicemembers here who helped to not only play the banjo and make some wonderful music, but folks who serve each and every day. For all of those who serve our country in uniform, thank you so much and God bless you. We're all grateful to you. All right?

So you guys have fun. And I want you guys to eat until you can't eat any more. [*Laughter*] All right? And then tomorrow you can "Let's Move!" [*Laughter*] All right. Thank you very much, everybody. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:20 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move!" initiative.

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama and President Tsakhia Elbegdorj of Mongolia
June 16, 2011

The President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, and the President of Mongolia, Elbegdorj Tsakhia, today reaffirmed their commitment to a United States-Mongolia comprehensive partnership based on common values and shared strategic interests. They emphasized their two countries' common interest in protecting and promoting freedom, democracy and human rights worldwide, and confirmed their intention to strengthen trade, investment and people-to-people ties so as to support economic growth and deepen the bonds of friendship between their two peoples. The two sides underscored their commitment to promoting a peaceful, stable and prosperous Asia-Pacific region through closer regional cooperation and support for regional multilateral institutions.

The United States and Mongolia reaffirmed their nations' commitments to the principles of cooperation outlined in the 2007 U.S.-Mongolia Joint Statement, and to the consensus reached in the 2004 and 2005 U.S.-Mongolia Joint Statements. The United States applauded the progress made by the Mongolian people in the past 22 years to deepen the foundations of their young democracy, congratulated Mongolia on assuming the Chairmanship of the Community of Democracies in July 2011, and expressed its full support and close cooperation with Mongolia in successfully fulfilling the Chair's responsibilities.

Mongolia welcomed and supported the key role played by the United States as an Asia-Pacific nation in securing peace, stability and prosperity in the region. The United States reaffirmed its support for a secure and prosperous Mongolia that plays an active role in regional affairs and that promotes strong, friendly and open relations with its neighbors. The United States and Mongolia pledged to work together to address their shared economic, security and development interests through regional institutions in the Asia-Pacific and through the United Nations and other multilateral organizations.

The two sides committed to further develop their countries' strong economic partnership. The United States confirmed its support for Mongolia's efforts to integrate its economy into regional and international economic and financial institutions. Mongolia expressed its appreciation for continued U.S. support and economic assistance. Mongolia noted the important role that U.S. companies, with their internationally leading management, technical, safety, environmental, and sustainable mining practices, will play in the development of the country's coal, other mineral resource, infrastructure, agriculture, energy and tourism industries. The United States welcomed Mongolian International Airlines' decision to purchase Boeing commercial jetliners and its declared intention to expand its fleet further with U.S. aircraft in the future. The United States

and Mongolia expressed their intention to ensure a welcoming investment and business climate for each other's companies. In this regard, the two sides highlighted the importance of concluding the negotiations and signing a bilateral Transparency Agreement by the end of 2011, taking into full account the resources, capacity and legal processes of each country. In order to further deepen economic ties, the two sides signed additional memoranda aimed at trade promotion and aviation cooperation.

Mongolia expressed its thanks for the support provided by the United States under the Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact Agreement, and both sides looked forward to the continued successful implementation of Compact projects that will increase transparency, stimulate sustained economic growth and alleviate poverty in Mongolia. The Mongolian side expressed its intention to take the necessary steps to qualify for consideration for a second MCC Compact Agreement.

The United States thanked Mongolia for its support of the international coalition in Afghanistan, for its announced intention to redeploy peacekeeping forces to Iraq, and for the country's notable support for UN peacekeeping efforts in Africa. Mongolia thanked the United States for the support it provided to Mongolia's Defence Reform Program. As part of this effort, the nations are working together to build an air mobility capability to support peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance operations. Both sides decided to continue practical cooperation in peacekeeping training through exercises such as Gobi Wolf, Khaan Quest and Pacific Angel.

The United States and Mongolia have decided to explore mutually advantageous activities in nuclear energy based on the September 2010 Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries. The United States recognized and supported the Mongolian Nuclear Initiative, and applauded Mongolia's nuclear weapons free status. Mongolia confirmed its support for President Obama's Prague vision to include the call for a "New International Framework."

The United States and Mongolia expressed their intention to deepen and broaden people-to-people ties. Building on the creativity of our societies, both countries emphasized the importance that educational and cultural exchanges play in the bilateral relationship, and confirmed the role that innovative public-private partnerships can play in strengthening bilateral ties.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity
June 17, 2011

Today for the first time in history, the United Nations adopted a resolution dedicated to advancing the basic human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons. This marks a significant milestone in the long struggle for equality and the beginning of a universal recognition that LGBT persons are endowed with the same inalienable rights and entitled to the same protections as all human beings. The United States stands proudly with those nations that are standing up to intolerance, discrimination, and homophobia. Advancing equality for LGBT persons should be the work of all peoples and all nations. LGBT persons are entitled to equal treatment, equal protection, and the dignity that comes with being full members of our diverse societies. As the United Nations begins to codify and enshrine the promise of equality for LGBT persons, the world becomes a safer, more respectful, and more humane place for all people.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation Created by the Accumulation of Weapons-Usable Fissile Material in the Territory of the Russian Federation
June 17, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000, with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation is to continue beyond June 21, 2011.

It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear weapons pursuant to various arms control and disarmament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses, subject to transparency measures, and protected from diversion to activities of proliferation concern. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation and maintain in force these emergency authorities to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
June 17, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Weekly Address
June 18, 2011

Hi, everybody. This Father's Day weekend, I'd like to spend a couple of minutes talking about what's sometimes my hardest, but always my most rewarding job: being a dad.

I grew up without my father around. He left when I was 2 years old, and even though my sister and I were lucky enough to have a wonderful mom and caring grandparents to raise us, I felt his absence. And I wonder what my life would have been like had he been a greater presence.

That's why I try pretty hard to be a good dad for my own kids. I haven't always succeeded, of course. In the past, my job has kept me away from home more often than I would have liked, and the burden of raising two young girls sometimes would fall too heavily on Michelle. But between my own experiences growing up and my ongoing efforts to be the best father I can be, I've learned a couple of things about what our children need most from their parents.

First and foremost, they need our time. And more important than the quantity of hours we spend with them is the quality of those hours. Maybe it's just asking about their day or taking a walk together, but the smallest moments can have the biggest impact.

They also need structure, including learning the values of self-discipline and responsibility. Malia and Sasha may live in the White House

these days, but Michelle and I still make sure they finish their homework, do their chores, and walk the dog.

And above all, children need our unconditional love, whether they succeed or make mistakes, when life is easy and when life is tough. And life is tough for a lot of Americans today.

More and more kids grow up without a father figure. Others miss a father who's away serving his country in uniform. And even for those dads who are present in their children's lives, the recession has taken a harsh toll. If you're out of a job or struggling to pay the bills, doing whatever it takes to keep the kids healthy and happy and safe can understandably take precedence over everything else.

That's why my administration has offered men who want to be good fathers a little extra support. We've boosted community and faith-based groups focused on fatherhood, partnered with businesses to offer opportunities for fathers to spend time with their kids at a bowling alley or a ballpark, and worked with military chaplains to help deployed dads connect with their children.

We're doing this because we all have a stake in forging stronger bonds between fathers and their children. And you can find out more about some of what we're doing at fatherhood.gov.

But we also know that every father has a personal responsibility to do right by our kids as well. All of us can encourage our children to turn off the video games and pick up a book. All of us can pack a healthy lunch for our son or go outside and play ball with our daughter. And all of us can teach our children the difference between right and wrong and show them through our own example the value in treating one another as we wish to be treated.

Our kids are pretty smart. They understand that life won't always be perfect, that sometimes, the road gets rough, that even great parents don't get everything right. But more than anything, they just want us to be a part of their lives.

So, recently, I took on a second job: assistant coach for Sasha's basketball team. On Sundays, we'd get the team together to practice, and a couple of times, I'd help coach the games. And it was great fun, even if Sasha rolled her eyes occasionally when her dad voiced his displeasure with the refs.

But I was so proud watching her run up and down the court, seeing her learn and improve and gain confidence. And I was hopeful that in the years to come, she'd look back on experiences like these as the ones that helped define her as a person and as a parent herself.

In the end, that's what being a parent is all about: those precious moments with our children that fill us with pride and excitement for their future, the chances we have to set an example or offer a piece of advice, the opportunities to just be there and show them that we love them.

That's something worth remembering this Father's Day and every day. Thanks, and happy Father's Day to all the dads out there. Have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:10 p.m. on June 17 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on June 18. In the address, the President referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 17, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on June 18.

Statement on the Observance of Juneteenth
June 19, 2011

On this day in 1865, more than 2 years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, the word finally came down to slaves in Galveston, Texas, that they were free and entitled to the same "absolute equality of rights" and "right to property" protected under law.

It would take many more years and many more struggles before African Americans received full and equal treatment under the law.

But today, here and around the world, we commemorate Juneteenth as a time to celebrate the rich heritage and significant contributions of African Americans and to recommit ourselves as Americans to the enduring pursuit of a more perfect Union and to the eternal principles of liberty and justice for all.

Statement on the United States Commitment to Open Investment Policy
June 20, 2011

The United States reaffirms our open investment policy, a commitment to treat all investors in a fair and equitable manner under the law, and I encourage all countries to pursue such a policy. My administration is committed to ensuring that the United States continues to be the most attractive place for businesses to locate, invest, grow, and create jobs. We encourage and support business investment from sources both at home and abroad.

Investments by foreign-domiciled companies and investors create well-paid jobs, contribute to economic growth, boost productivity, and support American communities. The United States consistently receives more foreign direct investment than any other country in the world. By voting with their balance sheets, businesses from abroad have clearly stated that the United States is one of the best places in the world to invest. This is because we have a strong and open economy, the world's most productive workforce, a unique culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, remarkable colleges and universities, and a business environment marked by transparency, protection of intellectual property, and the rule of law.

Inbound investment has long been an important component of our overall economy. Today, United States subsidiaries of foreign-domiciled companies employ more than 5 million Americans and provide above-average compensation. These companies invest in innovation here in the United States, spending over $40 billion each year on research and development. And in many cases the goods and services produced here are sold around the world, contributing to the National Export Initiative goal of doubling exports.

In a global economy, the United States faces increasing competition for the jobs and industries of the future. Taking steps to ensure that we remain the destination of choice for investors around the world will help us win that competition and bring prosperity to our people. Consistent with our national security and while ensuring a level playing field for American investors, we will do just that.

Statement on World Refugee Day
June 20, 2011

As we mark World Refugee Day, I join with people around the globe in highlighting the plight of the 15 million refugees in the world today, and we reaffirm our commitment to support them as they seek a safe place to call home again. In particular, we honor the courage of those who have been forcibly displaced from their homes, including men, women, and children in Libya, Syria, Cote d'Ivoire, who remind us that somewhere in the world, refugees are forced to flee their homes virtually every day.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, a landmark achievement of international law that sets forth certain rights of refugees and legal obligations of states relating to refugees. Hundreds of thousands, and probably millions, of people around the world are alive today thanks to the help and protection they received from the international community when they were forced to flee their countries to escape violence, oppression, abuse, and other forms of persecution.

This year is also the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. In at least 30 countries, nationality

laws discriminate against women and limit their ability to acquire and transmit citizenship to their children or spouses, which can lead to statelessness. The United States will continue to work to empower women and girls and ensure opportunities for displaced and stateless women throughout the world.

Our values and our interests dictate that the protection of the most vulnerable is a critical component of our foreign policy. We have a moral imperative to save lives. We also have interest in sustaining U.S. leadership, which enables us to drive the development of international humanitarian principles, programs, and policies like no other government in the world. Such efforts promote reconciliation, security, and well-being in circumstances where despair and misery threaten stability and critical U.S. national security interests.

Statement on the Approval of the Settlement in the *Cobell* Class-Action Lawsuit on Indian Trust Management
June 20, 2011

After 15 years of litigation, today's decision marks another important step forward in the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian Country. Resolving this dispute was a priority for my administration, and we will engage in government-to-government consultations with tribal nations regarding the land consolidation component of the settlement to ensure that this moves ahead at an appropriate pace and in an appropriate manner. And going forward, my administration will continue to strengthen our relationship with Indian Country.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser
June 20, 2011

Thank you, everybody. It is wonderful to see so many great friends. To Amy and all those who helped to organize tonight's dinner, I couldn't be more grateful.

Debbie Wasserman Schultz, our new DNC chair, thank you for all the extraordinary work that you're doing. I could not have made a better pick.

I want to spend most of the time in a conversation as opposed to just me making a long speech. But I do want to talk a little bit about the context in which we meet this evening. Obviously, we're going through extraordinarily challenging times. We've gone through the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. And a huge amount of energy has been devoted over the last 2 years to making sure that we pulled ourselves back from the brink; that an economy that was contracting is growing again; that we're putting more and more people back to work; that businesses are able to succeed; that we're educating our kids; that we're making investments that will help assure that America remains not only the most powerful country on Earth, but also one that is just and one that lives up to the American Dream, the idea that anybody who has a good idea, anybody who's willing to work hard, that they've got a shot at not only living a good life, but also passing on an even better life to their kids.

We also have an extraordinarily challenging international environment. When I came into office, we were in the midst of two wars. We are almost done with our troop presence in Iraq, by the end of this year. And in Afghanistan, we're in the process of a transition where we are starting to give more and more responsibility to Afghans for their own security, at the same time as we have been dogged in pursuing Al Qaida and are creating a situation where it is very, very difficult for them to operate.

But in the midst of all this, what we've now also seen is the kind of tumult taking place in

the Middle East that we haven't seen in a very long time. And the consequences of what's happening there are potentially as significant as the consequences of what took place in Europe when the Berlin Wall came down. It poses great challenges, but it also poses great opportunities.

And I think that the most important message I have for all of you here tonight is that even as we try to manage what is going to be a very difficult and challenging situation over the next 12 months, the next 24 months, the next decade, that one inviolable principle will be that the United States and Israel will always be stalwart allies and friends, that that bond isn't breakable, and that Israel's security will always be at the top tier of considerations in terms of how America manages its foreign policy. Because it's the right thing to do, because Israel is our closest ally and friend, it is a robust democracy, it shares our values, and it shares our principles.

Now, what's also going to be true is that both the United States and Israel are going to have to look at this new landscape with fresh eyes. It's not going to be sufficient for us just to keep on doing the same things we've been doing and expect somehow that things are going to work themselves out. We're going to have to be creative, and we're going to have to be engaged. We're going to have to look for opportunities where the best impulses in the Middle East come to the fore and the worst impulses are weakened.

We have to do so from a position of strength, which is why my administration has done more to promote Israel's security, its qualitative military edge, its defense capabilities, than any administration over the last 25 years. And we have made that commitment consistently.

But it also means that we've got to engage diplomatically. It means that we're going to have to find out who are the partners that can work with us and how do we strengthen them, and how do we isolate those who are unwilling to work with us and weaken them.

And there are going to be moments over the course of the next 6 months or the next 12 months or the next 24 months in which there may be tactical disagreements in terms of how we approach these difficult problems. But the broader vision, which is one in which Israel is a secure Jewish state, is able to live in peace with its neighbors, where kids can get on the bus or go to bed at night and not have to worry about missiles landing on them, where commerce and interactions between peoples in the region is occurring in a normal fashion, where the hopes and dreams of the original travelers to Israel—the original settlers in Israel, that those hopes and dreams that date back a millennium, that those hopes are realized. That will remain our north star; that will remain our goal.

And I'm absolutely confident that we can achieve that goal. But it's going to require some hard work. And it's going to require that not only this administration employs all of its creative powers to try to bring about peace in the region, but it's also going to require all of you, as engaged citizens of the United States who are friends of Israel, making sure that you are giving us suggestions, you are in an honest dialogue with us, that you're helping to shape how both Americans and Israelis think about the opportunities and challenges.

All of you are leaders in your community. And my hope is, is that through the kind of conversations that we're having here tonight, that we're going to be able to together craft the kind of strategy that not only leads to a strong America, but also leads to a strong Israel.

So to all of you who are here, thank you again for your past support, thank you for your friendship, and thank you for what I anticipate will be many years of collaboration between us in the years to come. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at the Mandarin Oriental hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Amy Friedkin, former president, American Israel Public Affairs Committee. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser
June 20, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Please have a seat, have a seat. It is wonderful to see all of you. I've got a lot of friends in the room here, people who knew me before anybody could pronounce my name—[*laughter*]—people who knew me before I had gray hair. [*Laughter*] It is wonderful to see those of you who've been friends for a long time, and it's wonderful to see new friends here as well.

What I'd like to do is to make some very brief remarks at the top and then have a chance to take a few questions because that will give us a chance to have a dialogue and you might have some suggestion that we haven't thought of. And it's one of the great things about these kinds of events is people here have so much expertise in so many different areas that it's a wonderful thing for me to be able to pick your brain as well as just you guys hearing me chatter.

We are obviously going through one of the toughest periods in American history. We went through the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, and immediately after being elected, I had to take a series of very difficult steps to rescue ourselves from the brink. We had lost 4 million jobs in the 6 months before I was sworn in, lost another 4 million during the period probably 6 months after I was elected. And so as a consequence, we had to do some things that we didn't expect we would have to do, just to save the economy: stabilize the financial system, make sure that States and local governments didn't have to lay off police officers and cops and firefighters. We had to save an auto industry; I never expected to be a automobile executive. [*Laughter*]

As a consequence of that swift, decisive, and sometimes difficult period, we were able to take an economy that was shrinking by about 6 percent and create an economy that is now growing and has grown steadily now over many consecutive quarters. Over the last 15 months, we've created over 2.1 million private sector jobs. We have an auto industry that, for the first time in a very long time, is profitable and the Big Three automakers actually gaining market share, and not only gaining market share, but also gaining market share in the cars of the future so that they're actually competing in compact cars and subcompact cars and electric cars and hybrids.

And so I'm extraordinarily proud of the economic record that we were able to produce over the first 2½ years, but having said all that, the economy is still so tough for so many people around the country. The hole that was dug was so deep. And most importantly, the reasons that I decided to run for President in the first place still had not been fully addressed. Because the fact is, is that even before this financial crisis, wages and incomes had flatlined for most Americans. Those at the very top had seen themselves do very well, but the bottom 95 percent, the bottom 90 percent, they were treading water at a time when their cost of health care and cost of college education, cost of groceries, cost of gasoline all were going up. And that was before the crisis hit. And now they've got to worry about homes that have lost value and businesses that are just barely getting by.

And so although we've made a turn in a positive direction, the underlying structural challenges that we face remain. And so the reason that 2012 is important is because I did not just run for President to get us back to where we were, I ran for President originally to move us to where we need to be.

And what that means is that what we've begun we had to finish. We've begun to reform our education system, and thanks to programs like Race to the Top, we're not just putting more money into the schools. We are saying to schools and States and local school districts, if you reform, if you get rid of the dogmas of the left or the right and you focus on student achievement and how to get the best possible teachers at the front of the classroom and we're rewarding excellence and we are holding ourselves accountable, you know what, there's no reason why we can't make sure that we have the highest proportion of college graduates in

the world and make sure that every single one of our young people are equipped to compete in a 21st-century economy.

We have begun the process of changing how we think about energy in this country: made the largest investment in clean energy in our history through the Recovery Act; have stood up entire industries like advanced battery manufacturing; invested in making sure that wind power and solar power and biothermal energy, that all of these things are being developed and researched right here in the United States of America.

But the fact of the matter is, is that we are still way too dependent on foreign oil and the fuels of the past. And so part of our unfinished business is making sure that we are getting electric cars on our roads and that we are not only tapping into traditional energy sources here in the United States of America, but we're also becoming more energy efficient. We're at the cutting edge of a clean energy revolution that could not only free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil and clean up our environment, but also produce jobs right here in the United States of America. Our job is not finished when it comes to energy policy.

We're not done when it comes to rebuilding our infrastructure. America has always had the best stuff: we had the best roads, we had the best ports, we had the best airports. People would travel from around the world to marvel at the infrastructure we had built. We can't claim to have the best anymore. You go to airports in Beijing or Singapore that put a lot of our airports to shame, high-speed rail networks all through Europe that could be built here in the United States of America.

And so imagine what we could do putting people back to work right now doing the work that America needs to be done. We started. We made the largest investment in infrastructure since Dwight Eisenhower was President through the Recovery Act, but we've still got $2 trillion worth of repairs to be made. And think about all those unemployed construction workers out there that could be working right now rebuilding America for the future. And not just the old traditional infrastructure, the new infrastructure: a smart grid that would help us become more energy efficient and get energy from wind farms or solar panels to the places where it's needed most; making sure that we've got the best broadband and 4G and 5G and—so that we have the best communication networks in the world.

We started, but we haven't finished. We've started reforming our health care system, and I could not be prouder of the work that we did on the health care act. But we now have to implement it, because health care costs are still going up too fast for families, for businesses, and for governments, State and Federal, that are paying the bills.

And so this is a matter not only of making sure that 30 million Americans never again have to go bankrupt because somebody in their family gets sick. It's also making sure that we're getting a better bang for our health care dollar; that instead of taking five tests, you take one test and it's e-mailed to five doctors; that we make certain that preventive medicine is in place so that people aren't getting amputated because of diabetes—they're not getting diabetes in the first place.

Those are the changes that we initiated through the Affordable Care Act, but we've got to finish the job. The same is true when it comes to financial reform, making sure that we never go through the financial meltdown that we went through again, but also, at the same time, that we're looking after consumers and protecting them for the first time in a very long time, whether it's getting a mortgage or taking out a credit card. Our job is not finished.

We've made tremendous progress on a whole host of social issues, from ending "don't ask, don't tell" so that every American can serve their country regardless of who they love to making sure that we've got equal pay for equal work, to making sure that we've got national service so that our young people can use their talents to help rebuild America.

But our job is not finished. We still have work to do on immigration reform, where we have to once again be a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants, one that welcomes the strength that comes from talented people from

all around the world wanting to be here, but also making sure that we're doing it in orderly way.

And we sure have got a lot of work to do on the international front. When I came into office, we had two active wars. By the end of this year, one war will be done. And we will be transitioning in Afghanistan to turn over more and more security to the Afghan people.

But there's also enormous challenges and opportunities to all that's happening in the Arab world right now. And it requires us to articulate clearly what we stand for, what our values are, to reject isolationism, but it also requires us to recognize that us having influence in these affairs is going to have less to do with our firepower and more to do with our ideas and our example, our economic engagement, the quality of our diplomacy. We've still got more work to do.

So the bottom line is this. Back in 2008, on election night, in Grant Park—it was a nice night in Chicago—I said to people, this is not the end, this is the beginning. We've got a steep climb ahead of us to get to that summit where we want to be, where every single American knows that if they work hard, if they're doing the right thing, if they're carrying out their responsibilities, they have a chance at the American Dream.

We're just part of the way up that mountain. And the only way we're going to get all the way up that mountain is if we are as engaged, as motivated, as involved, as excited, working as hard as we were in 2008. And that may be a little bit of challenge. Because, let's face it, back in 2008, I was new. [*Laughter*]

Now I'm gray. [*Laughter*] I've got dings and dents. The old posters are all faded. [*Laughter*] People make fun of hope and change. And some folks have said, "Well, change didn't happen as fast as I wanted." Or, "It's not exactly as I expected." Or, "Why can't he just change the minds of all those Republicans?" [*Laughter*]

The thing is, change is never easy because we live in a democracy. And that's what's wonderful about this country, is we argue it out and ideas are tested. And sometimes we lurch this way or that way, and mistakes are made, but our general trajectory has always been to advance prosperity and equality and opportunity.

And so this process, as difficult as it has been, has also been invigorating. And I've never had more confidence in the possibilities of this great American experiment, partly because I get a chance to see and talk to Americans from every walk of life. And we are a good, decent people. And as hard as things have been, we are resilient, and we come back.

And so if you're willing to join with me in what will be my last campaign—[*laughter*]—if you're willing to dig deep and talk to your friends and neighbors and coworkers and recognize, yes, we're a little older, we've matured a little bit, but that that fundamental project of delivering the American Dream for that next generation, that's just as urgent and as vital as ever, then I'm confident not only will we win in 2012, more importantly, we'll get a little further up that mountain. That's our job.

So thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:06 p.m. at the Mandarin Oriental hotel. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Situation in Sudan
June 22, 2011

On Monday, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) signed an agreement in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to reduce tensions in Abyei and allow U.N. peacekeepers from Ethiopia into the region. I commend the parties for taking this step forward toward peace, and I urge them now to build on that progress and agree to an immediate cease-fire in Southern Kordofan. Under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, both parties committed to resolve their differences peacefully, and both parties have a re-

sponsibility to end the current violence and allow immediate humanitarian access to desperate people who have been driven from their homes and are now cut off from outside help.

The situation in Southern Kordofan is dire, with deeply disturbing reports of attacks based on ethnicity. The United States condemns all acts of violence, in particular the Sudanese Armed Forces aerial bombardment of civilians and harassment and intimidation of U.N. peacekeepers. With a cease-fire in Southern Kordofan alongside the agreement to deploy peacekeepers to Abyei, we can get the peace process back on track. But without these actions, the roadmap for better relations with the Government of Sudan cannot be carried forward, which will only deepen Sudan's isolation in the international community. Without a cease-fire and political negotiations, the people of Southern Kordofan cannot enjoy the right to have their political grievances addressed. The negotiations now under way in Addis Ababa demand the urgent commitment from both sides to peace and to the agreement for immediate help to those civilians caught up in this conflict.

Address to the Nation on the Drawdown of United States Military Personnel in Afghanistan

June 22, 2011

Good evening. Nearly 10 years ago, America suffered the worst attack on our shores since Pearl Harbor. This mass murder was planned by Usama bin Laden and his Al Qaida network in Afghanistan and signaled a new threat to our security, one in which the targets were no longer soldiers on a battlefield, but innocent men, women, and children going about their daily lives.

In the days that followed, our Nation was united as we struck at Al Qaida and routed the Taliban in Afghanistan. Then, our focus shifted. A second war was launched in Iraq, and we spent enormous blood and treasure to support a new government there. By the time I took office, the war in Afghanistan had entered its seventh year. But Al Qaida's leaders had escaped into Pakistan and were plotting new attacks, while the Taliban had regrouped and gone on the offensive. Without a new strategy and decisive action, our military commanders warned that we could face a resurgent Al Qaida and a Taliban taking over large parts of Afghanistan.

For this reason, in one of the most difficult decisions that I've made as President, I ordered an additional 30,000 American troops into Afghanistan. When I announced this surge at West Point, we set clear objectives: to refocus on Al Qaida, to reverse the Taliban's momentum, and train Afghan security forces to defend their own country. I also made it clear that our commitment would not be open-ended and that we would begin to draw down our forces this July.

Tonight I can tell you that we are fulfilling that commitment. Thanks to our extraordinary men and women in uniform, our civilian personnel, and our many coalition partners, we are meeting our goals. As a result, starting next month, we will be able to remove 10,000 of our troops from Afghanistan by the end of this year, and we will bring home a total of 33,000 troops by next summer, fully recovering the surge I announced at West Point. After this initial reduction, our troops will continue coming home at a steady pace as Afghan security forces move into the lead. Our mission will change from combat to support. By 2014, this process of transition will be complete, and the Afghan people will be responsible for their own security.

We're starting this drawdown from a position of strength. Al Qaida is under more pressure than at any time since 9/11. Together with the Pakistanis, we have taken out more than half of Al Qaida's leadership. And thanks to our intelligence professionals and special forces, we killed Usama bin Laden, the only leader that Al Qaida had ever known. This was a victory for all who have served since 9/11. One soldier summed it up well. "The message," he

said, "is we don't forget. You will be held accountable, no matter how long it takes."

The information that we recovered from bin Laden's compound shows Al Qaida under enormous strain. Bin Laden expressed concern that Al Qaida had been unable to effectively replace senior terrorists that had been killed and that Al Qaida has failed in its effort to portray America as a nation at war with Islam, thereby draining more widespread support. Al Qaida remains dangerous, and we must be vigilant against attacks. But we have put Al Qaida on a path to defeat, and we will not relent until the job is done.

In Afghanistan, we've inflicted serious losses on the Taliban and taken a number of its strongholds. Along with our surge, our allies also increased their commitments, which helped stabilize more of the country. Afghan security forces have grown by over 100,000 troops, and in some Provinces and municipalities, we've already begun to transition responsibility for security to the Afghan people. In the face of violence and intimidation, Afghans are fighting and dying for their country, establishing local police forces, opening markets and schools, creating new opportunities for women and girls, and trying to turn the page on decades of war.

Of course, huge challenges remain. This is the beginning—but not the end—of our effort to wind down this war. We'll have to do the hard work of keeping the gains that we've made while we draw down our forces and transition responsibility for security to the Afghan Government. And next May, in Chicago, we will host a summit with our NATO allies and partners to shape the next phase of this transition.

We do know that peace cannot come to a land that has known so much war without a political settlement. So as we strengthen the Afghan Government and security forces, America will join initiatives that reconcile the Afghan people, including the Taliban. Our position on these talks is clear: They must be led by the Afghan Government, and those who want to be a part of a peaceful Afghanistan must break from Al Qaida, abandon violence, and abide by the Afghan Constitution. But, in part because of our military effort, we have reason to believe that progress can be made.

The goal that we seek is achievable and can be expressed simply: No safe haven from which Al Qaida or its affiliates can launch attacks against our homeland or our allies. We won't try to make Afghanistan a perfect place. We will not police its streets or patrol its mountains indefinitely. That is the responsibility of the Afghan Government, which must step up its ability to protect its people and move from an economy shaped by war to one that can sustain a lasting peace. What we can do, and will do, is build a partnership with the Afghan people that endures, one that ensures that we will be able to continue targeting terrorists and supporting a sovereign Afghan Government.

Of course, our efforts must also address terrorist safe havens in Pakistan. No country is more endangered by the presence of violent extremists, which is why we will continue to press Pakistan to expand its participation in securing a more peaceful future for this war-torn region. We'll work with the Pakistani Government to root out the cancer of violent extremism, and we will insist that it keeps its commitments. For there should be no doubt that so long as I am President, the United States will never tolerate a safe haven for those who aim to kill us. They cannot elude us, nor escape the justice they deserve.

My fellow Americans, this has been a difficult decade for our country. We've learned anew the profound cost of war, a cost that's been paid by the nearly 4,500 Americans who have given their lives in Iraq and the over 1,500 who have done so in Afghanistan, men and women who will not live to enjoy the freedom that they defended. Thousands more have been wounded. Some have lost limbs on the battlefield, and others still battle the demons that have followed them home.

Yet tonight we take comfort in knowing that the tide of war is receding. Fewer of our sons and daughters are serving in harm's way. We've ended our combat mission in Iraq, with 100,000 American troops already out of that

country. And even as there will be dark days ahead in Afghanistan, the light of a secure peace can be seen in the distance. These long wars will come to a responsible end.

As they do, we must learn their lessons. Already, this decade of war has caused many to question the nature of America's engagement around the world. Some would have America retreat from our responsibility as an anchor of global security and embrace an isolation that ignores the very real threats that we face. Others would have America overextended, confronting every evil that can be found abroad.

We must chart a more centered course. Like generations before, we must embrace America's singular role in the course of human events. But we must be as pragmatic as we are passionate, as strategic as we are resolute. When threatened, we must respond with force. But when that force can be targeted, we need not deploy large armies overseas. When innocents are being slaughtered and global security endangered, we don't have to choose between standing idly by or acting on our own. Instead, we must rally international action, which we're doing in Libya, where we do not have a single soldier on the ground, but are supporting allies in protecting the Libyan people and giving them the chance to determine their own destiny.

In all that we do, we must remember that what sets America apart is not solely our power, it is the principles upon which our Union was founded. We're a nation that brings our enemies to justice while adhering to the rule of law and respecting the rights of all our citizens. We protect our own freedom and prosperity by extending it to others. We stand not for empire, but for self-determination. That is why we have a stake in the democratic aspirations that are now washing across the Arab world. We will support those revolutions with fidelity to our ideals, with the power of our example, and with an unwavering belief that all human beings deserve to live with freedom and dignity.

Above all, we are a nation whose strength abroad has been anchored in opportunity for our citizens here at home. Over the last decade, we have spent a trillion dollars on war, at a time of rising debt and hard economic times. Now, we must invest in America's greatest resource: our people. We must unleash innovation that creates new jobs and industries, while living within our means. We must rebuild our infrastructure and find new and clean sources of energy. And most of all, after a decade of passionate debate, we must recapture the common purpose that we shared at the beginning of this time of war. For our Nation draws strength from our differences, and when our Union is strong, no hill is too steep, no horizon is beyond our reach. America, it is time to focus on nation-building here at home.

In this effort, we draw inspiration from our fellow Americans who have sacrificed so much on our behalf. To our troops, our veterans, and their families, I speak for all Americans when I say that we will keep our sacred trust with you and provide you with the care and benefits and opportunity that you deserve.

I met some of these patriotic Americans at Fort Campbell. A while back, I spoke to the 101st Airborne that has fought to turn the tide in Afghanistan and to the team that took out Usama bin Laden. Standing in front of a model of bin Laden's compound, the Navy SEAL who led that effort paid tribute to those who had been lost, brothers and sisters in arms whose names are now written on bases where our troops stand guard overseas and on headstones in quiet corners of our country where their memory will never be forgotten. This officer—like so many others I've met on bases in Baghdad and Bagram and at Walter Reed and Bethesda Naval Hospital—spoke with humility about how his unit worked together as one, depending on each other and trusting one another, as a family might do in a time of peril.

That's a lesson worth remembering, that we are all a part of one American family. Though we have known disagreement and division, we are bound together by the creed that is written into our founding documents and a conviction that the United States of America is a country that can achieve whatever it sets out to accomplish. Now let us finish the work at hand. Let us

responsibly end these wars and reclaim the American Dream that is at the center of our story. With confidence in our cause, with faith in our fellow citizens, and with hope in our hearts, let us go about the work of extending the promise of America for this generation and the next.

May God bless our troops, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks at Fort Drum, New York
June 23, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Thank you. I don't want to give a long speech, because I want to spend most of my time just shaking hands and thanking all of you.

Colonel Burleson, thank you so much for your leadership. To Sergeant Major Defreese and Parham, to all of you, there's a reason I wanted to come here today. As the colonel just mentioned, in 2009, after having been in Afghanistan for 7 years, but having, I think, lost a sense of focus in terms of how we were going to accomplish our mission, I made the most difficult decision that I've made as President, and that is to deploy an additional 30,000 troops into Afghanistan so that we could turn back Taliban momentum, so that we could continue to go after Al Qaida aggressively, and so that we could make sure that we were training an Afghan security force that had the capacity to secure their own country.

The only reason I was able to make that decision was because I knew that we had the finest fighting force in the world and that if I gave a command to our troops, they would be able to accomplish that mission. If we were focused and if we were clear in terms of what we were going to try to accomplish, I knew that we could get it done.

And the 10th Mountain Division, this storied—this group that has been there for America day in, day out throughout our history, was the first folks to go in after that order was given. And that's not surprising because you guys were also some of the first folks to go in right after 9/11.

Throughout my service, first as a Senator and then as a Presidential candidate and then as a President, I've always run into you guys. And for some reason, it's always in some rough spots.

First time I saw 10th Mountain Division, you guys were in southern Iraq. When I went back to visit Afghanistan, you guys were the first ones there. I had the great honor of seeing some of you because a comrade of yours, Jared Monti, was the first person who I was able to award the Medal of Honor to who actually came back and wasn't receiving it posthumously [sic].*

And so you guys have always been there in the toughest fights. And the fact that you are continuing, even as we speak, that many of your comrades are there right now under some very tough circumstances, is a testimony to your dedication and your patriotism.

Now, last night I gave a speech in which I said that we have turned a corner where we can begin to bring back some of our troops. We're not doing it precipitously. We're going to do it in a steady way to make sure that the gains that all of you helped to bring about are going to be sustained. But because of your outstanding work, what we've been able to do is train an additional hundred thousand Afghan soldiers so that they can start carrying on the fight.

Because of what you've done, areas like Kandahar are more secure than they have been in years. Because of you, we're now taking the fight to the Taliban instead of the Taliban bringing the fight to us. And because of you,

* See note below.

there are signs that the Taliban may be interested in figuring out a political settlement, which ultimately is going to be critical for consolidating that country.

It's also because of you that we had the platform to be able to go after bin Laden and Al Qaida. And we have decimated their ranks. Al Qaida leadership, half of them have been killed, and most of them are now on the run, and they can't operate as effectively as they could.

And so as I look around this room, I suspect that some of you joined the military after 9/11 because you had seen fellow Americans suffer at the hands of bin Laden. And when we got them—when we got him, and as we keep on driving to get the rest of them, it's because of the work and the sacrifice that you guys have made.

Now, the 10th Mountain and the 1st Brigade, you guys have sacrificed mightily. I know that you got 11 fallen soldiers just out of this group right here, and I think about 270 all told since 9/11.

We will never forget their sacrifice. And the reason that, I know, many of you continue to do the outstanding work that you do is not only love of country, but it's also love for each other and your commitment to making sure that those sacrifices were not in vain.

So the main message I have for all of you here today is that the American people understand the sacrifices you're making, they understand the sacrifices that your families are making. Our job is not finished.

If you looked at the schedule that I set forth, we're only bringing out 10,000 by the end of this year. We're going to bring out all 33,000 that we surged by next summer. But there's still some fighting to be done. And then we're still going to have 68,000. And frankly, the 10th Mountain Division is still going to be represented there until we have fully transferred to the Afghan military and security forces.

But I hope that all of you can both take pride in what you've done over the past years, but also understand that there's a future there that is brighter not only for the Afghan people, but for—most importantly, for American security. And you guys are the tip of the spear. You guys are the ones that keep us safe each and every day.

So for all the sacrifices that you've made, I want to say thank you. For all the sacrifices that your families have made, I want to say thank you. I have no greater job, nothing gives me more honor, than serving as your Commander in Chief. And to all of you who are potentially going to be redeployed, just know that your Commander in Chief has your back.

So thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. "Climb to Glory." Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. in the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade dining facility. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Willard M. Burleson, USA, commander, and CSM Dennis E. Defreese, USA, command sergeant major, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division; and CSM Terry E. Parham, Sr., USA, post command sergeant major, Fort Drum. He also referred to SFC Jared C. Monti, USA, who was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor on September 17, 2009.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to North Korea
June 23, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance

with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008, expanded in scope in Executive Order 13551 of August 30, 2010, and addressed further in Executive Order 13570 of April 18, 2011, is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2011.

The existence and the risk of proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula, and the actions and policies of the Government of North Korea that destabilize the Korean Peninsula and imperil U.S. Armed Forces, allies, and trading partners in the region, continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to these threats and maintain in force the measures taken to deal with that national emergency.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
June 23, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Western Balkans
June 23, 2011

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622 (d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the Western Balkans emergency is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2011.

The crisis constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton accords in Bosnia, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo, or the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001 in Macedonia, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on June 26, 2001, in Executive Order 13219, and to amendment of that order in Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, has not been resolved. The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity outlined in Executive Order 13219, as amended, are hostile to U.S. interests and continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the Western Balkans and maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
June 23, 2011.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City
June 23, 2011

The President. Hello, New York! Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Everybody, please have a seat. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Jonathan, for your service to this country and for continuing to fight for what this country stands for, even after you had to take off the uniform.

I also want to recognize the extraordinary performance of Audra McDonald. I like hearing her sing. I want to thank our emcee for this evening, Neil Patrick Harris. Everybody knows that Neil is openly terrific. [*Laughter*]

Couple of other acknowledgments: Christine Quinn, the New York City council speaker, is here; a great friend of mine who helped move the process forward to make sure that "don't ask, don't tell" got done, Patrick Murphy is in the house; the DNC treasurer, Andy Tobias, is here—I think they like you, Andy; and I want to thank the cochairs of the LGBT Leadership Council. Thank you so much. This is just an extraordinary event.

It is wonderful to be back in New York. I see a lot of new faces, but also a lot of friends who I have known for a very long time. Many of you knew me before I had gray hair. [*Laughter*] Malia and Sasha says it makes me look distinguished; Michelle says it makes me look old. [*Laughter*]

Now, being here with all of you, I can't help but think back to election night 2½ years ago. We were in Grant Park; some of you were there. Beautiful night. Culmination of an extraordinary journey, a campaign that had drawn on the hard work and support of people all across the country, men and women who believed that change was possible, who believed that we didn't have to accept politics as usual, who believed that we could once again be a country that lived up to our highest aspirations, not our lowest common denominators. And it was a perfect night, and we were feeling pretty good, I got to admit.

But what I said then at Grant Park was that this was not the end of the road, it was just the beginning. And I said that the journey was going to be long and it was going to be difficult and there were going to be times where we stumbled, that the climb was going to be steep. Now, we didn't know exactly how steep it was going to be. [*Laughter*] But we knew that it wasn't going to be easy to rebuild the middle class after a decade of stagnant incomes and rising costs, a decade where a lot of Americans felt like that dream was slipping away.

We knew it wasn't going to be easy to end two wars and restore America's leadership around the world. We knew it wasn't going to be easy to fix our immigration system, to reform our health care system, to transform our energy policy, to educate our young people for the demands of a global economy. We did not think it was going to be easy.

And I said that night, I did not run for President to do easy things. I ran because I believed that as a nation it was time for us to do the hard things. It was time for us to do the big things, even if it took time, even if sometimes it was going to be frustrating. I said I was not going to let politics or the typical Washington games stand in our way, because it had held us back for too long. That's what led to the mess that we were dealing with in the first place.

So over these past 2½ years, I've had some tough calls to make. I had some tough calls as soon as I took office. We had to prevent a financial system from falling apart and dragging the economy into depression. We had to pass reforms to stop abuses in the financial system and prevent future crises. We had to rescue the auto industry. I did not think I was going to be an auto CEO. [*Laughter*] Even though there were a lot of people who said, let them go, let more than a million jobs vanish, allow two of America's iconic companies to be liquidated and sold off for parts, we said, no, we're going to have to step up, we're going to have to deal with it.

But even as we took these emergency steps, we started tackling all the challenges that we had talked about during the campaign, all the things that were standing in the way of the

American Dream. Because that's why I ran, that's what the campaign was about. That's why you supported me, because we believed in an economy that didn't just work for those at the top, but worked for everybody, where prosperity was shared from the machinist on the line to the manager on the floor to the CEO in the boardroom.

We worked so hard in 2008 because we believed that we have to define our success not just by stock prices or corporate profits, but whether ordinary folks can find a good job, whether they can afford a middle class life, whether they can pay the mortgage and take care of their kids and save some money for their child's college education or their own retirement and maybe have a little left over to go to a movie or dinner or even a play—since we're in New York. [*Laughter*]

That's why we cut taxes for middle class families and ended subsidies to the banks for student loans to make college more affordable. That's why I was proud to sign a bill to make sure women earn equal pay for equal work, a basic principle. That's why we're promoting manufacturing and homegrown American energy, because that's what will lead to jobs that pay a decent salary. That's why we're standing up a new consumer bureau with just one responsibility: looking out for ordinary folks in the financial system so they're not cheated. That's why we passed health reform, so that nobody in the richest nation on Earth ever has to go bankrupt because they or somebody in their family get sick. That was the right thing to do.

We waged that long campaign in 2008 because we believed it was time to end the war in Iraq. And that is what we are doing, ending the war in Iraq. We removed a hundred thousand troops from Iraq already, ended combat missions there. We're on track to bring the rest of our troops home by the end of this year.

I ran for President because I believed we needed to refocus our efforts in Afghanistan, and we're doing this too. We pummeled Al Qaida. We took out bin Laden. And because of our progress and the extraordinary sacrifices of our troops, we're now fulfilling the commitment I made to start reducing our troops this month so that Afghans can take responsibility for their own security.

I also ran because we now live in a world where America is facing stiff competition for good jobs. There are rapidly growing nations like China and India. They're hungry; they're on the move. And for a long time, we were told that the best way to win this competition was to undermine consumer protections, undermine clean air and clean water laws, hand out tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires, and everything would work out just fine. It did not work out well. In fact, if you look at our history, you'll see that philosophy has never worked out very well.

America was built on the hard work of people and the ingenuity of our businesses. But we also built a system of free public high schools and sent a generation to college on the GI bill. We constructed railroads and highways that spanned a continent. We invested in research and technology, and we sent a man to the Moon, and we discovered lifesaving medicine. We launched the Information Age, creating millions of jobs along the way. That's how you build a nation. That's how you build a strong middle class. And that's what we need to do today.

There is an important debate in Washington right now about cutting the deficit. And it is absolutely critical that we cut the deficit. Like families all across America, Government has to live within its means. And I'm prepared to bring down our deficit by trillions of dollars; that's "trillions" with a "t."

But I won't reduce our deficit by sacrificing the education of our young people. We can't stop medical research being done by our scientists. We can't stop building the infrastructure that made this country great. I'm not going to sacrifice clean energy at a time when our dependence on foreign oil has caused Americans so much pain at the pump. That doesn't make any sense. In other words, I will not sacrifice America's future.

What makes America great is not just the scale of our skyscrapers or our military might or the size of our GDP. What makes us great is the character of our people. Yes, we are rugged individualists, and we are self-reliant, and

that's part of what makes us Americans. We don't like being told what to do. But what also makes us who we are is we've got faith in the future and we recognize that that future is shared, the notion that I'm my brother's keeper, I'm my sister's keeper. My life is richer and stronger when everybody in the country has some measure of security, everybody has got a fair shot at the American Dream. That's what makes us great. That's our vision for America.

It's not a vision of a small America. It's a vision of a big America, a compassionate America, and a bold and optimistic America. And it's a vision where we're living within our means, but we're still investing in our future. And everybody is making sacrifices, but nobody bears all the burden. An America where we live up to the idea that no matter who we are, no matter what we look like, we are connected to one another.

That's what led many of us to fight so hard, to knock on so many doors and maybe harangue some of our friends, this belief that it was up to each of us to perfect this Union. It was our work to make sure that we were living up to a simple American value: We're all created equal—all created equal.

Ever since I entered into public life, ever since I have a memory about what my mother taught me and my grandparents taught me, I believed that discriminating against people was wrong. I had no choice; I was born that way—[*laughter*]—in Hawaii. And I believed that discrimination because of somebody's sexual orientation or gender identity ran counter to who we are as a people, and it's a violation of the basic tenets on which this Nation was founded. I believe that gay couples deserve the same legal rights as every other couple in this country.

And that's—now, there was such a good recitation earlier by Neil that I feel bad repeating it, but let me just—it bears repeating. [*Laughter*] This is why we're making sure that hospitals extended visitation rights to gay couples, because nobody should be barred from their bedside because their partner—the bedside of their partner in a moment of pain or a moment of need. Nobody should have to produce a legal contract to hold the hand of the person that they love.

It's why we launched the first comprehensive national HIV/AIDS strategy, providing a roadmap not only to providing treatment and reducing infections, but also embracing the potential of new, groundbreaking research that will help us bring an end to this pandemic.

That's why I ordered Federal agencies to extend the same benefits to gay couples that go to straight couples wherever possible. It's why we're going to keep fighting until the law no longer——

Audience member. Marriage!

Audience member. Marriage! Marriage! Marriage!

The President. I heard you guys. [*Laughter*] Believe it or not, I anticipated that somebody might ask—[*laughter*].

Where was I? [*Laughter*] That's why we're going to keep on fighting until the law no longer treats committed partners who have been together for decades like they're strangers.

That's why I have long believed that the so-called Defense of Marriage Act ought to be repealed. It was wrong. It was unfair. And since I taught constitutional law for a while, I felt like I was in a pretty good position to agree with courts that have ruled that section 3 of DOMA violates the Constitution. And that's why we decided, with my Attorney General, that we could no longer defend the constitutionality of DOMA in the courts.

Now, part of the reason that DOMA doesn't make sense is that, traditionally, marriage has been decided by the States. And right now I understand there's a little debate going on here in New York—[*laughter*]—about whether to join five other States and DC in allowing civil marriage for gay couples. And I want to say that under the leadership of Governor Cuomo, with the support of Democrats and Republicans, New York is doing exactly what democracies are supposed to do. There's a debate; there's deliberation about what it means here in New York to treat people fairly in the eyes of the law.

And that is—look, that's the power of our democratic system. It's not always pretty.

There are setbacks. There are frustrations. But in grappling with tough and, at times, emotional issues in legislatures and in courts and at the ballot box, and yes, around the dinner table and in the office hallways, and sometimes even in the Oval Office, slowly but surely we find the way forward. That's how we will achieve change that is lasting, change that just a few years ago would have seemed impossible.

Now, let me just say this. There were those who doubted that we'd be able to pass a hate crimes law. Occasionally, I got hollered at about that. After a decades-long fight, we got it done, bringing us closer to the day when nobody is going to be afraid to walk down the street because they're gay or transgender.

There were those said we couldn't end "don't ask, don't tell." And I remember having events where folks hollered out at events. [*Laughter*] But we passed the repeal. We got it done. We're now moving forward with implementing it. So we're no longer going to demand brave and patriotic Americans live a lie to serve their country.

Folks like Captain Jonathan Hopkins, who led a platoon into northern Iraq during the initial invasion and quelled an ethnic riot and earned a Bronze Star with valor. He was discharged, only to receive e-mails and letters from his soldiers saying, if they had known he was gay all along—that they had known he was gay all along and they still thought he was the best commander they had ever had.

That's how progress is being won here in New York, around the country. Day by day, it's won by ordinary people who are striving and fighting and protesting for change and who, yes, are keeping the pressure up, including pressure on me. And by men and women who are setting an example in their own lives: raising their families, doing their jobs, joining the PTA, singing in church, serving and sacrificing for this country overseas, even as they are not always granted the full rights of citizenship they deserve here at home.

Last year, I received a letter from a teenager growing up in a small town, and he told me he was a senior in high school, and that he was proud to be the captain of a club at his school, and that he was gay. And he hadn't told his parents. He hadn't come out. He was worried about being mocked or being bullied. He didn't think it was safe to, in his words, "openly be myself." But this 17-year-old also looked towards the day when he didn't have to be afraid, when he didn't have to worry about walking down the hallway. And he closed his letter by saying: "Everyone else is considered equal in this country. Why shouldn't we be?"

So yes, we have more work to do. Yes, we have more progress to make. Yes, I expect continued impatience with me on occasion. [*Laughter*] But understand this—look, I think of teenagers like the one who wrote me, and they remind me that there should be impatience when it comes to the fight for basic equality. We've made enormous advances just in these last 2½ years. But there are still young people out there looking for us to do more, to help build a world in which they never have to feel afraid or alone to be themselves. And we know how important that is to not only tell them that it's going to get better, but to also do everything in our power to ensure that things actually are better.

I'm confident that we will achieve the equality that this young person deserves. I'm confident that the future is bright for that teenager and others like him and that he can have the life that he wants and that he imagines.

There will be setbacks along the way. There will be times where things aren't moving as fast as folks would like. But I know that he'll look back on his struggles and the struggles of many in this room, as part of what made change possible, part of what it took to reach the day when every single American, gay or straight or lesbian or bisexual or transgender, was free to live and love as they see fit.

And we can look at the progress we've made in the last 2 years, to the changes that were led not by Washington, but by folks standing up for themselves or for their sons or for their daughters, fighting for what's right. Not just change on behalf of gay Americans, but for everybody looking to fulfill their version of the American Dream. Whether it's the students working their way through college or the work-

ers heading to factories to build American cars again or the energy entrepreneurs testing bold ideas, the construction crews laying down roads, the small-business owners and scientists and inventors and builders and all those Americans who faced hardship and setbacks, but who never stopped believing in this country, its capacity to change, who are helping each and every day to rebuild this Nation so that we emerge from this period of struggle stronger and more unified than ever before.

And that's the story of progress in America—that's what all of you represent—of the stubborn refusal to accept anything less than the best that this country can be. And with your help, if you keep up the fight, and if you will devote your time and your energies to this campaign one more time, I promise you, we will write another chapter in that story. And we are going to leave a new generation with a brighter future and a more hopeful future. And I'll be standing there, right there with you.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:59 p.m. at the Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers. In his remarks, he referred to actor Neil Patrick Harris.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City
June 23, 2011

Thank you. Thank you, everybody. It's great to be here. Everybody, please have a seat. It's me, it's true. [*Laughter*]

It is wonderful to see all of you. Thank you so much for coming here tonight. To the host committee, who have generally been supportive of me since I had no gray hair. [*Laughter*] I was telling people the other day, Malia and Sasha think I look distinguished; Michelle thinks I look old. [*Laughter*]

But I'm thrilled to be here tonight, and I appreciate all of you taking the time to have what I hope is a good conversation, but also the wonderful support that you've shown.

What I'd like to do is to speak very briefly at the top, and then I want to spend as much time as possible just exchanging ideas and answering questions.

When I was elected—I think back to 2008 and Grant Park, and it was a beautiful night—I said to people, this is not the end, this is the beginning, and that we were going to have a steep hill to climb. I had gotten into the race because of this profound belief in America, but also because there was a huge gap between what I thought America could be and where we were; that we had seen a decade where incomes and wages had stagnated. We had seen the absence of any coherent energy policy that would free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil and help to clean up the planet. Our education system, there was a lot of talk about reforming it, but we hadn't made the kind of progress that would allow us to be competitive in the 21st century.

There seemed to be a lack of pragmatism when it came to thinking about regulation and how we make a health care system that works for people and where we're getting a better bang for the buck.

And so I knew that all these things were going to be difficult. I have to say, I didn't always anticipate how difficult, because at the time when we were campaigning, we didn't realize that we were already entering what would turn out to be the worst recession since the Great Depression; that we'd lost 4 million jobs before I was even sworn in; and we'd lose another 4 million jobs in the 4 or 5 months after my Inauguration, but before any of our economic policies had a chance to take effect.

So we have spent the last 2½ years cleaning up a big mess. We've stabilized the financial system, and the markets have recovered a large part of what they had lost, which is important not just for Wall Street, but is important for people across the country and the economy as a whole. Capital is flowing again. Businesses who are large or medium size are able to access capital and invest it in plants and equipment

and hire new workers. An economy that was shrinking by about 6 percent is now growing. We've added, over the last 15 months, over 2 million private sector jobs.

So we've been able to stabilize the economic situation. But as everybody here understands, we have a long way to go because there's still a lot of folks out there who are hurting. And I meet them every day, and I get letters from them every day, people who have been laid off midcareer and are doing everything they can to try to get a job, but still having a great deal of difficulty finding one.

[*At this point, a cell phone rang in the audience.*]

Is it for me? [*Laughter*]

Small businesses that have still not recovered from what happened during the recession. There is enormous anxiety from a lot of folks about our debt and our deficits and how we start living within our means, but still making the investments in clean energy and education and infrastructure that are so vital to us remaining competitive.

And so there is a disquiet out there because, I think, people recognize that although the most imminent aspects of the crisis are over, that we haven't yet broken through to the future that we want. And that's why this campaign is going to be so important.

I announced yesterday that we were going to begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan. And we brought the Iraq war to an end, and we'll have all of our troops out by the end of this year. But in the same way that having cleaned up a mess doesn't necessarily take us to where we want to go in a foreign policy perspective, the same is true for our economy.

We're still going to have a lot of work to do; we've got a lot of unfinished business. And part of what 2012 is going to end up being about is just a set of contrasting visions about how we move this country forward. That's what this budget debate is all about.

Everybody agrees that we should reduce the deficit. Everybody agrees that the debt is out of control. But there's one vision that says we can shrink our Government to the size it was in the 1930s, that fundamentally restructures our social safety net, that prevents us from making investments in infrastructure or research and development or science and technology or education. And there's a vision that says, we're going to have to share sacrifice, everybody is going to have to bear some burden for getting this deficit under control, and we can still make the investments that are required for the future, and we can still make sure that we're a country that is looking out for the most vulnerable and our seniors and people who need help.

And I know that most of you, I think, share the vision that I have, partly because a lot of us in this room have been incredibly lucky, but we weren't necessarily born lucky. There are a lot of folks in this room, like me, who ended up achieving the American Dream because somebody made an investment in us. Somebody said, "You know what, you can have a scholarship to go to the best universities in the world, even though your family isn't well connected." Somebody said, "You are going to have the opportunity to practice law in a law firm, even though you didn't have any lawyers in your family." Somebody said, "You can go ahead and run for the United States Senate, even though you've got no connections and nobody can pronounce your name." [*Laughter*]

That's what America is about. And part of what this debate is going to be about going into 2012 is, do we want a smaller, more cramped vision of what America can be and who can fully participate in it? Or do we have a big, generous, compassionate vision about what America can be, in which everybody is participating, and we're all pulling on that laboring war to move the country forward, and we're all benefiting when we arrive at our destination?

I'm confident about where the American people are. Sometimes the debates in Washington get people so frustrated and the arguments are so vitriolic and so ideologically driven that people just get turned off and they don't even want to pay attention. But when you sit down and you talk to people and you listen to them—what their values are, what their ideals are, where they tell you their story about how they were able to build a middle class life

for themselves, and what they hope for, for their children and their grandchildren—it turns out that there's just an incredible decency and resilience and strength to the American people that has yet to be tapped. And our job is to tap it. That's what this campaign is going to be about.

So I hope you will join me. I hope you will be as enthusiastic as many of you were back in 2008. I've got to tell you that, partly because of the gray hair. I know that it's not going to be exactly the same as when I was young and vibrant and new. [*Laughter*] And there was—posters everywhere, "Hope." [*Laughter*] The logo was really fresh. [*Laughter*] And let's face it, it was cool to support me back then. [*Laughter*] At cocktail parties, you could sort of say: "Yeah, this Obama guy, you haven't heard of him? Let me tell you about him." [*Laughter*]

Now I'm sort of old news. But the vision hasn't changed, and my enthusiasm and my commitments haven't changed. And I hope yours haven't changed either, because if we're able to work just as hard as we did in 2008, then I think we're going to get through this very difficult time. We'll emerge on the other side stronger, more unified, more vibrant, more competitive than we've ever been before.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. at Daniel restaurant. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City
June 23, 2011

The President. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. It is good to be back in New York City! Good to be back on Broadway. Thank you, Whoopi Goldberg. We love you. How about the cast of "Sister Act"? Give them a big round of applause.

Everybody, you can take a seat. Just relax. [*Laughter*] The—it is wonderful to follow "Sister Act." [*Laughter*] It helped me on my research, figuring out what convent to send Malia and Sasha. [*Laughter*] They're getting a little too old and too cute. [*Laughter*]

It is wonderful to be with all of you tonight. And I will not spoil a great show with a long speech. But I do have a few things to say. [*Laughter*] You know, I was reflecting back on my last campaign and the 2008 election. And a lot has changed since then. I am a little grayer. [*Laughter*] My daughters say it makes me look distinguished. And Michelle says it makes me look old. [*Laughter*] But I think back to that day in Grant Park on election day and speaking to the American people and trying to absorb this incredible honor. And I said to so many of you that as special as this night was, this was not the end, this was just the beginning.

And the reason I said that was because I had decided to run for President because I thought the gap had grown too large between the country we know we can be and the country as it was. We'd gone through a decade in which incomes and wages for ordinary people had actually gone down. We had gone through a decade that had seen a hemorrhaging of manufacturing in this country. We had gone through a decade in which the costs of everything from health care to college tuition to gas were going up and too many families were just treading water. We'd gone through a decade of two wars, a diminished respect for America around the world.

We had kicked the can down the road for too long on critical issues like having an energy policy that would allow us to free ourselves from our dependence on foreign oil and would allow us to clean up the environment and make sure that the new jobs of the future were created right here in the United States of America.

So we knew that we had a lot of work to do. We knew that we had a steep hill to climb. Now, it turned out that the hill was even steeper than we thought. Because what we didn't know fully at the time, what we didn't fully appreciate was that we were already in the midst of the worst recession since the Great Depression. We had lost 4 million jobs before I was

even sworn in, and we'd lose another 4 million in the few months right after my Inauguration.

And so all the hardships that families had been feeling, the fact that they felt as if the American Dream was slipping away from them, all those problems were compounded by this incredible crisis.

And so I had to make a series of decisions very quickly. And they were big and often tough decisions. We had to make sure that we yanked the economy back from the brink of a Great Depression. We had to make sure that we stabilized the financial system so that we didn't have a full meltdown and so that businesses could get financing and keep their doors open and keep their employees and make payroll. We had to save an auto industry. I didn't anticipate being a CEO of a couple auto companies, but—[*laughter*]—we had to make sure that we saved those iconic companies from liquidation because a million jobs depended on them.

And as a consequence of those decisions, all of which were hard, all of which were controversial, many of which were not popular, we were able to bring the economy back from the brink, and we were able to stabilize the financial system. An economy that was shrinking by 6 percent a year began growing again. An economy that was shedding hundreds of thousands of jobs has now, over the last 15 months, created more than 2 million jobs in the private sector alone.

And along the way, we made extraordinary progress on the commitments that I made to the American people and commitments we made to each other during the campaign. So we passed health care so that families will never go bankrupt when they get sick in this country again. And we passed financial reform to make sure that consumers aren't cheated and we don't see taxpayer bailouts for the financial system again. And we passed equal pay for equal work because we thought that was the right thing to do. And we ended "don't ask, don't tell," so that anybody can serve this country regardless of who they love.

And we expanded national service for young people so they could participate and contribute into the building of America. We made the largest investment in clean energy in our history and the largest investment in education and the—we changed the student loan system so that we weren't given billions of dollars to banks, but we were giving them directly to students.

And overseas, we brought down—we brought back a hundred thousand troops out of Iraq, and we ended the combat mission there. And because of the extraordinary diplomacy of our Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and all the great work that's been done, we were able to help restore a sense of standing and a sense of purpose around the world.

And so the track record of the last 2½ years is one that I could not be prouder of. And we couldn't have accomplished it because of you. We could not have accomplished it without of you. But what is also true is we've got so much work left to do, because there are still millions of people across the country who are hurting. I hear from them every day: people who send out 16, 30, 50 résumés and haven't gotten an answer back and are starting to feel like they will never find a job again, people who have lost their homes, people who've seen their small business and their life savings lost in the crisis.

And some of the big projects that we set for ourselves during the campaign have not yet been done. We still don't have an energy policy that is suitable for the 21st century. We still have to invest in clean energy, so that solar panels and wind turbines are built right here in this country, and electric cars are built right here in the country and we are focused not on the energy sources of the past, but the energy sources of the future. We still have that project to deal with climate change in a serious way. Those things haven't changed.

We still have so much more work to do on education. We have made great strides, but we have to hit the goal that I set that once again we will have the highest proportion of college graduates of any country in the world and every single young person who is willing to apply themselves can afford to go to college without taking on hundreds of thousands of dollars of

debt. That is still something that we've got to accomplish.

We've still got to implement health care reform, because there are a whole bunch of folks who want to undo what we've accomplished. We have not yet gotten immigration reform done. And we are a nation of immigrants as well as a nation of laws, and we've got to have a system that makes sure that every single person who wants to come here and become a part of the fabric of this society, that they have fair and legal and orderly ways that they can legally immigrate to this country.

So we've got a huge amount of work left to do. And we're going to have to make some very tough decisions if we are going to be able to make the investments that are going to be critical to America's future.

That's what this budget debate in Washington is all about right now. You've already heard a little bit about it, and over the next few weeks, it's going to start heating up and we're going to have to make some very, very tough decisions because we need a Government that lives within its means. You all live within your means, hopefully. [*Laughter*] And that means that you've got to prioritize. We don't have unlimited resources, so we've got to decide what's important to us.

But this is not just a budget question, this is a values question. So I've put forward a plan that says, yes, we can cut every program that's not working and every little bit of waste that we can find across the board, whether it's in the Defense Department or it is in social service programs that don't work. We can't waste money, because times are tight.

But what I've also said is we can't stop investing in the things that are going to make us competitive in the future. We can't stop investing in education. We can't stop investing in medical research. We can't stop investing in building our infrastructure, all the things that help make us the greatest country in the world. We cannot stop caring for our seniors and our—the disabled and the most vulnerable in our society.

And so what you're going to see over the next several months, but also over the next several years, is a debate about who we are, because there's a way for us to solve our deficit problems and our debt problems in a way that's fair and balanced and that shares sacrifice so that we're not just doing it on the backs of the poor, we're not just doing it on the backs of those without a voice or those who can't afford a lobbyist in Washington.

One of the disagreements that we have is, even after we've made all these cuts—and we're making some painful, difficult decisions—the notion that I, who, because a bunch of you guys bought my book, am actually doing very well—[*laughter*]—should not have to pay a little more, the notion that I'd get a $200,000 tax break and, as a consequence of that tax break, hundreds of kids might not be able to go to Head Start or, as a consequence of a tax break for me, that senior citizens might end up having to pay thousands of dollars more for their Medicare—see, that—that's not who I think we are.

I don't believe in a small America or a cramped vision of America that says only a few can do well. I believe in a big America, an expansive and compassionate and generous America and a bold America and an optimistic America and one that says it does not matter who you are or what you look like or where you come from, everybody's got a chance at the American Dream.

And we've all got an obligation to help each other achieve our dreams, that we're not in this just for ourselves, that you're not just on your own, that I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper. And I believe that not just out of a sense of compassion or charity, but because if I drive by a school and I see kids out there playing in the playground and I know that they've got a great teacher in there and they're learning their math and they're learning their science and they're going to be able to get on track to college and a career, I say to myself, you know what, that makes me feel good because that's better for my life, knowing that kids in my country all have a shot.

And if I—if at some point ever I'm able to walk in Central Park again—[*laughter*]—and I'm taking a stroll and I see an elderly couple

pass by me and they're holding hands, and I'm thinking, oh, that's going to be me and Michelle some day, and I know that they've got the security of a stable retirement and they're not going to have to worry that if they get sick, they'll lose everything, that makes my life better.

That's the vision I've got for America. That's what we're fighting for. That's why you campaigned for me in 2008. That's why I need you to campaign for me again in 2012. Our job is not done. We've got to fight for that vision.

Audience members. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. Now, let me just say that I know I'm preaching to the choir here. [*Laughter*] But I also know that over the last 2½ years, there have been times where you think to yourself, "Gosh, I'm not feeling as hopeful." [*Laughter*] "This change, I'm not sure I can believe in it." [*Laughter*] I know you still got the poster. [*Laughter*] But there have been times where you say, "You know, how come we didn't get the public option?" [*Laughter*] Or, "Why did health care take so long?" Or the—you know, I know that there are times where you get frustrated and you——

Audience member. Never!

The President. No, well that's not true. [*Laughter*] Maybe you don't get frustrated, but—because—and the reason I say that is I get frustrated. I would love to be able to just—our whole program just got implemented in 6 months, and I would then just relax. [*Laughter*]

But you know what, we live in a democracy, and it's a big and messy democracy. And it's noisy, and it's contentious. But that's what democracy is. That—it requires engagement, and it requires citizens to take these debates seriously and to pay attention and to suffer setbacks.

Sometimes, people say, "Oh, you know, I don't know, during the campaign, everything was so terrific, and now governing seems so much more frustrating." And I want to remind everybody, the campaign seemed frustrating a lot of times. [*Laughter*] It wasn't perfect either. And we had setbacks, and we had struggles, and there were times where we didn't get to where we wanted to go as quick as we wanted.

But I just want everybody to understand, we have made enormous progress. And the only reason we've made progress is because all of you stayed committed and all of you stayed engaged. And all of you, no matter the setbacks, said, "I still believe that America can be better, and I'm going to play a part in it." This campaign was never just about me. It was about the commitments we made to each other as Americans and the commitments we're making to the next generation.

So don't sit back and wait. Don't sit back and wait for me. I need you. I need all of you to knock on doors and make phone calls and send e-mails and do whatever it is that you need to do, because we are going to need the same energy and the same passion and the same engagement. And if we do, then I promise you there is nothing that will stop us and we will get done everything that we promised we would get done.

God bless you, New York. I love you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 p.m. at the Broadway Theatre. In his remarks, he referred to comedian and actor Whoopi Goldberg, who introduced the President.

Remarks at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
June 24, 2011

Hello, hello, hello! Thank you very much. Everybody, please have a seat. Thank you. Hello, Pittsburgh! It is good to be back. Thank you, Senator Casey and Mayor Ravenstahl, County Executive Dan Onorato, State Auditor Jack Wagner, and all of you for having me back here at Carnegie Mellon. It is good to be here.

And it seems like every time I'm here I learn something. So for those of you who are thinking about Carnegie Mellon, it's a terrific place, and you guys are doing just great work.

I just met with folks from some cutting-edge companies and saw some of their inventions here in your National Robotics Engineering Center. But that's not the only reason I'm here. You might not know this, but one of my responsibilities as Commander in Chief is to keep an eye on robots. [*Laughter*] And I'm pleased to report that the robots you manufacture here seem peaceful—[*laughter*]—at least for now.

This is a city that knows something about manufacturing. For generations of Americans, it was the ticket to a middle class life. Here and across America's industrial heartland, millions clocked in each day at foundries and on assembly lines to make things. And the stuff we made—steel, cars, planes—was the stuff that made America what it is. The jobs were good. They paid enough to own a home, to raise kids, send them to college, to retire. They were jobs that told us something more important than just how much money we made, what was in our paycheck. These jobs also told us that we were meeting our responsibilities to our family and to our neighborhoods, and building our communities, and building our country.

But for better and worse, our generation has been pounded by wave after wave of profound economic change. Revolutions in technology have transformed the way we live and the way we work. Businesses and industries can relocate anywhere in the world—anywhere that there are skilled workers, anywhere that there is an Internet connection. And companies have learned to become more efficient with fewer employees. In Pittsburgh you know this as well as anybody. Steel mills that once needed a thousand workers now do the same work with a hundred.

And while these changes have resulted in great wealth for some Americans and have drastically increased productivity, they've also caused major disruptions for many others. Today, a high school diploma no longer guarantees you a job. Over the past 13 years, about a third of our manufacturing jobs have vanished. And meanwhile, the typical worker's wages have barely kept up with the rising costs of everything else. And all this was even before a financial crisis and recession that pounded the middle class even more.

Now, we've made some tough decisions that have turned our economy in a positive direction over the past 2 years. We've created more than 2 million new jobs in the private sector over the past 15 months alone, including almost 250,000 in manufacturing. But we still have to confront those underlying problems. They weren't caused overnight, and we won't solve them overnight. But we will solve them. And we're starting to solve them right here in Pittsburgh and right here at Carnegie Mellon.

And by the way, that's why I ran for President. Not just to get us back to where we were—I ran for President to get us to where we need to be. I have a larger vision for America, one where working families feel secure, feel like they are moving forward and that they know that their dreams are within reach, an America where our businesses lead the world in new technologies like clean energy, where we work together, Democrats and Republicans, to live within our means, to cut our deficit and debt, but also to invest in what our economy needs to grow: world-class education, cutting-edge research, and building the best transportation and communication infrastructure anywhere in the world. That's what it's going to take for us to win the future. And winning the future begins with getting our economy moving right now.

And that's why we're here. Carnegie Mellon is a great example of what it means to move forward. At its founding, no one would have imagined that a trade school for the sons and daughters of steelworkers would one day become the region's largest—one of the region's largest employers and a global research university. And yet innovations led by your professors and your students have created more than 300 companies and 9,000 jobs over the past 15 years, companies like Carnegie Robotics.

But more important than the ideas that you've incubated are what those ideas have become: They've become products made right here in America, and in many cases, sold all over the world. And that's in our blood. That's

who we are. We are inventors and we are makers and we are doers.

If we want a robust, growing economy, we need a robust, growing manufacturing sector. That's why we told the auto industry 2 years ago that if they were willing to adapt, we'd stand by them. Today, they're profitable, they're creating jobs, and they're repaying taxpayers ahead of schedule.

That's why we've launched a partnership to retrain workers with new skills. That's why we've invested in clean energy manufacturing and new jobs building wind turbines and solar panels and advanced batteries. We have not run out of stuff to make. We've just got to reinvigorate our manufacturing sector so that it leads the world the way it always has, from paper and steel and cars to new products that we haven't even dreamed up yet. That's how we're going to strengthen existing industries; that's how we're going to spark new ones. That's how we're going to create jobs, grow the middle class, and secure our economic leadership.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. in the National Robotics Engineering Center.

Statement on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
June 24, 2011

As we mark the anniversary of the United Nations Convention against Torture, I join people around the world in honoring the victims of torture, paying tribute to all those who are courageously working to eradicate these inhuman practices from our world, and reaffirming the commitment of the United States to achieving this important goal.

Generations of Americans have understood that torture is inconsistent with our values. Over two decades ago, President Reagan signed and a bipartisan Senate coalition ratified this landmark document, which affirms the essential principle that under no circumstances is torture ever justified. Torture and abusive treatment violate our most deeply held values, and they do not enhance our national security. They undermine it by serving as a recruiting tool for terrorists and further endangering the lives of American personnel. Furthermore, torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment are ineffective at developing useful, accurate information. As President, I have therefore made it clear that the United States will prohibit torture without exception or equivocation, and I reaffirmed our commitment to the Convention's tenets and our domestic laws.

As a nation that played a leading role in the effort to bring this treaty into force, the United States will remain a leader in the effort to end torture around the world and to address the needs of torture victims. We continue to support the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture and to provide funding for domestic and international programs that provide assistance and counseling for torture victims. We also remain dedicated to supporting the efforts of other nations, as well as international and nongovernmental organizations, to eradicate torture through human rights training for security forces, improving prison and detention conditions, and encouraging the development and enforcement of strong laws that outlaw this abhorrent practice.

The President's Weekly Address
June 25, 2011

Hello, everybody. Earlier this week, I spoke about our way forward in Afghanistan, and I said that because of the extraordinary work of our men and women in uniform, civilians, and our coalition partners, we will soon begin bringing our troops home, just as we've begun doing in Iraq. After a decade of conflict, we're finally bringing these wars to a responsible end.

That's in the best interest of America's security, and it's also in the best interest of America's economy. Even though we've turned our economy in the right direction over the past couple of years, many Americans are still hurting, and now is the time to focus on nation-building here at home.

Of course, there's been a real debate about where to invest and where to cut, and I'm committed to working with members of both parties to cut our deficits and debt. But we can't simply cut our way to prosperity. We need to do what's necessary to grow our economy, create good, middle class jobs, and make it possible for all Americans to pursue their dreams.

That means giving our kids the best education in the world so they have the knowledge and skills to succeed in this economy. It means rebuilding our crumbling roads, railways, and runways. And it means investing in the cutting-edge research and technologies that will spur growth in the years ahead, from clean energy to advanced manufacturing.

That's why I'm here today at Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh, one of America's leading research universities. Behind me is a display from a company called RedZone Robotics. The robots they make are used to explore water and sewage pipes and find leaks and breaks before they become expensive problems. But the folks at RedZone aren't just solving problems; they're working with unions to create new jobs operating the robots, and they're saving cities millions of dollars in infrastructure costs.

This company is just one example of how advanced manufacturing can help spur job creation and economic growth across this country. That's why this week we launched what we're calling an Advanced Manufacturing Partnership. It's a partnership that brings our Federal Government together with some of America's most brilliant minds and some of America's most innovative companies and manufacturers.

Their mission is to come up with a way to get ideas from the drawing board to the manufacturing floor to the marketplace as swiftly as possible, which will help create quality jobs and make our businesses more competitive. But they also have a broader mission. It's to renew the promise of American manufacturing, to help make sure America remains in this century what we were in the last, a country that makes things, a country that outbuilds and outinnovates the rest of the world.

I know these have been tough years for American manufacturing and all the workers and families who've built their lives around it. But being here in Pittsburgh, I'm hopeful about the future. I'm hopeful when I think about how companies like RedZone are reinvigorating manufacturing or about how what started as a small trade school is now a global research university. We are a people who've always adapted to meet the challenges of a new time, who've always shaped our own destiny, and I'm absolutely confident that that's what we're going to do one more time.

Have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:35 a.m. on June 24 in the National Robotics Engineering Center at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA, for broadcast on June 25. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 24, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on June 25.

Remarks Honoring the 2010 Major League Soccer Champion Colorado Rapids

June 27, 2011

The President. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Now, I just want to point out that I got the memo and dressed appropriately in the gray suit. [*Laughter*]

Welcome to the White House, and congratulations to the Colorado Rapids on winning your first MLS Cup.

I want to begin by recognizing Stan Kroenke and Coach Gary Smith for building such an extraordinary program.

And some of you know, I am a soccer dad myself. [*Laughter*] I have watched my share of games over the years. And I'm used to seeing everybody gather around the ball, and then it kind of pops out somewhere, and everybody runs over to the ball. [*Laughter*] And so I want to congratulate all the players behind me for coming so far since those days, because I'm sure your parents were thinking the same thing—that these guys can't play. [*Laughter*]

They may not be household names, but the great thing about sports is that, in the end, that doesn't really matter. What matters is how well a team can pull together when the chips are down, and that's exactly what the Rapids did.

This team had the second worst record of any team in the playoffs last year. But they showed up in close games, they clawed back from behind. They just kept on winning. And when the clock ran out, the Rapids were the best team in American soccer.

So this is a testament to players like Pablo, the captain, who played 286 games over 13 years before finally earning a title. Where are you, Pablo? Right here. Congratulations. Players like Omar Cummings and Conor Casey, who were the highest scoring forward combination in the league. Where are you guys? Omar? And players like Mac Kandji, who fired the cross that led to the championship-winning goal, even as he tore his ACL in the process. Mac, where are you? You doing okay? All right.

But what really sets this team apart is not how they play only. It's also why they play. They have a love for the game that has brought them together.

This team obviously has overcome quite a few cultural differences. This is like a mini United Nations right here. [*Laughter*] You've got players from Argentina, England, France, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Scotland, and Senegal. In fact, I heard that the night before the championship, Kosuke Kimura—where is Kosuke? Right here. I understand that he made a very inspiring speech to the team, but it was in Japanese, so nobody really—[*laughter*]—understood what he was saying, but it was really inspirational, was what I heard. [*Laughter*]

This is also a team that makes due without the high salaries and perks that some other professional sports teams enjoy. Players can sometimes actually be seen eating at local restaurants together after practice. A few guys chipped in to buy a fishing boat that they keep hidden in the stadium parking lot. [*Laughter*]

But while life in the MLS isn't always fancy, it serves to bring players closer to each other and to their fans. Wells Thompson likes to take food from the stadium and give it to the homeless on nearby street corners. Where is Wells? Right here. If a fan wants a player to show up at a charity event or help out with a nonprofit, all they have to do is ask. These guys show up. More often than not, the Rapids staff only finds out about these visits after they happen.

So these aren't just good players, they're also good people. And I want to thank them for teaming up with MLS today to put on a soccer clinic here at the White House for kids from military families. You will make their summer, and you will make their parents happier when they actually know what to do on the soccer field. [*Laughter*]

So congratulations again to the players, to the staff, the fans back in Colorado, everybody who is part of this program. Good luck again this season, and we hope to see you back here soon. So thank you very much. Give them a big round of applause.

Colorado Rapids Managing Director Jeff Plush. So real quick, on behalf of our owner, Stan Kroenke, everyone associated with the Colorado Rapids Soccer Club and Major League Soccer, all of our players, fans, it's our honor to make you an honorary member, and present you with your very own jersey——

The President. That's good.

Mr. Plush. ——commemorating the 2011 Championship.

[*At this point, the President was presented with a Colorado Rapids team jersey.*]

The President. That's a good-looking jersey.

Mr. Plush. As you know, the number 10 is the leader, so——

The President. Absolutely. That is me and Messi. We're right up there. Absolutely. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Plush. So thank you very much.

The President. Thank you so much. Thank you. This is terrific. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to E. Stanley Kroenke, owner, Pablo Mastroeni, midfielder, Macoumba Kandji, forward, Kosuke Kimura, defender, and Wells Thompson, midfielder, Colorado Rapids; and Lionel A. Messi, forward, FC Barcelona and the Argentine national team.

Statement on National HIV Testing Day
June 27, 2011

National HIV Testing Day reminds each of us to do our part in fighting HIV/AIDS and get tested. It has been 30 years since we witnessed the emergence of HIV, an illness from which roughly 600,000 Americans have died and with which more than 1 million Americans live. After years of critical investments in research, prevention, and care, we now have the tools to stem the spread of the disease and extend the lives of those Americans living with HIV. And for the first time, we have a comprehensive plan for addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic in our country.

Last July, my administration released a national HIV/AIDS strategy for the United States which commits this Nation to reducing new HIV infections, increasing access to care for people living with HIV, and reducing HIV-related health disparities. The strategy's release came amid important scientific advances to help protect the health of people with HIV and prevent further transmission. One in five Americans living with HIV is not aware of their infection, and this research highlights the imperative of making sure people know their HIV status and getting those who do have HIV into care.

All of us have a responsibility to ourselves and those around us to know our status and reduce our risk. So on this National HIV Testing Day and every day, I encourage every American to join the fight against HIV/AIDS and get tested.

Remarks at Alcoa Davenport Works in Riverdale, Iowa
June 28, 2011

Hello, hello! Thank you. Please—you can cut the music. Thank you, everybody. Have a seat, have a seat. It is great to see all of you. Good to be back in the Quads.

Hello, Iowa! I see a couple of old friends here. I want to start by recognizing a few folks who are with us today. First of all, Governor Branstad is here. Congressman Bruce Braley is here. Congressman Dave Loebsack is here. Bobby Schilling is here. Michael Freemire, the mayor of Bettendorf, is here. And Jeff Grindle, mayor of Riverdale, is here. The chairwoman of the National Association of Manufacturers, Mary Andringa, is here. The CEO of Alcoa, Klaus Kleinfeld, is here; vice president and general manager, Davenport, Malcolm Murphy, is here. And an old friend of mine who actually drove me around a couple times while I was traveling around Iowa, Skip McGill, is here, president of the local USW.

You know, I know you've been seeing a lot of politicians around lately. Something tells me that you may see a few more before February is over. But Iowa, you and I, we go a long way

back. And those of you who are coming over from the Illinois side, we go even longer back. So we've got some history together. And together, we're going to make some more history for years to come.

And that's why I'm so glad to be here at Alcoa. All of you are showing the future we can build here in eastern Iowa and all across the country. Almost every airplane in the world has some kind of Alcoa product in it. Think about that. Every airplane in the world, you guys have something to do with.

In fact, it turns out that you're responsible for the wings on Air Force One. So I want to thank all of you for getting me here in one piece. [*Laughter*] It was a pretty smooth ride, thanks to Alcoa.

Now, this company was founded by a college student named Charles Martin Hall a hundred and twenty-five years ago. And back then, it produced about 50 pounds of aluminum a day. And it was so hard to sell that folks kept on telling Charles that it was pointless even to lock up the plant at night because nobody wanted the stuff. But when the Wright brothers—you heard of them, right, the Wright brothers—when they needed a lightweight material for their plane, they turned to Alcoa. And this company hasn't looked back ever since.

When President Kennedy challenged America to go to the Moon, your engineers produced the alloys that helped get a man on the Moon. In Afghanistan and Iraq, you've helped provide our troops with the armor they need to protect their vehicles from roadside bombs and IEDs. And let me tell you, when I go to Walter Reed or Bethesda and I think about all the lives you guys have saved, it makes me proud of what you do right here. And today, your new aluminum-lithium alloy is making some of the world's most advanced airplanes lighter and tougher and more cost effective than ever.

So you know that times change. You've seen times change. Alcoa has grown as America has grown. Now, you also know that sometimes change can be tough. Sometimes the old ways of doing things just won't cut it anymore. I was just talking to Klaus; he was talking about some sheet metal that you guys produce, that for a while you guys lost market share completely. You got your team together, redesigned it, and now you have 80 percent of the market back. That's adapting to change. And see, when change happens, you've got a choice. You can either keep on doing what you were doing and hope things work out, or you can make the decision that not only you can meet the challenges of the future, but you can help set the pace.

That's true for this company, and it's true for America. For better or for worse, our generation has seen more than our fair share of economic change. Revolutions in technology have changed the way we live and the way we work. A lot of jobs can now be located anywhere there's an Internet connection. And companies have become more efficient, so they get by with fewer workers.

Now, in some ways, these changes have made our lives a lot easier. It makes products cheaper. You can produce them faster. But for a lot of our friends and neighbors, these changes have also caused a whole lot of pain. Today, for example, a high school diploma no longer guarantees you a good job. I kept a—I met a couple of the guys here whose fathers had worked at the plant. Now, when the previous generation came to work at this plant, it didn't matter what kind of education you had, it just mattered whether you were willing to work hard. But these days, it's hard to find a job without a high school diploma. And in a lot of cases, it's hard to find a job without a college diploma.

Over the past 13 years, about a third of our manufacturing jobs have vanished. They—it's not just that they've gone overseas, it's also that you guys are just better at producing stuff now than you used to be, so you use fewer workers. And meanwhile, a lot of workers have seen their wages not keep up with rising costs.

So I spent a lot of time thinking about these issues when I ran for this office in the first place. When I ran for President, before I came to Iowa, when I was still a Senator in Illinois, I kept on thinking about all the folks I would meet in my travels who were feeling that

squeeze of wages flat, costs going up. And then in the closing weeks of the campaign, the bottom fell out of the economy and the middle class got hammered some more. And I know, talking to Klaus, Alcoa got hit pretty good too.

That demanded that we make some tough decisions, decisions that we now know have pulled our economy back from the brink and put us on a better path. We've created more than 2 million new private sector jobs over the last 15 months alone, including almost 250,000 in manufacturing. That's in the last 15 months.

And here at this plant, the workers that were laid off during the darkest days of the recession have all been hired back. And in fact, you guys are telling me that you're thinking about hiring some more folks in the near future. That's worth applauding. Somebody was—[*applause*].

But you know, for a lot of Americans, those numbers don't matter much if they're still out of work or if they have a job that doesn't pay enough to make the mortgage or pay the bills. So we've got more work to do. And that work is going to take some time. The promise—the problems that we developed didn't happen overnight. We're not going to solve them overnight either. But we will solve them.

We'll solve them because after all we've been through, we are still the United States of America. We've got the largest economy. We've got the best universities. We've got the most successful companies. We've got the best innovators and entrepreneurs. We've got the best workers in the world. Together, we've got the capacity not only to get back to where we were, but to get to where we need to be.

That's why I ran for President, to get us where we need to be. I ran because I believe in an America where working families aren't just treading water, but they're moving forward, and where our businesses lead the change on new technologies like clean energy and advanced manufacturing of the sort you're doing right here at this plant.

I believe in an America where our Government lives within its means while investing in things that will help us grow, like a world-class education system and cutting-edge innovation and the best transportation and communication systems anywhere in the world. That's how we're going to make America the best place to create good, middle class jobs. That's how we're going to win the future, by doing the smart things right now to help the middle class grow and feel more secure.

And a big part of that, a big part of our future has to be a robust and growing manufacturing sector. We've got to make things right here in America. Now, we've always made things here in America. It's in our blood. This plant has been in operation for 60 years. And what you've learned is that if you want to beat the competition, then you've got to innovate. You've got to invest in new skills, you've got to invest in new processes, you've got to invest in new products. I was just learning that some of the equipment right behind us—this was a huge investment. How much did you guys—$90 million. Think about that. That's what made you guys competitive: having the best workers, but also having the best equipment. You had to up your game. And that's what we've got to do as a country as a whole. I want the cars and planes and wind turbines of the future to bear the proud stamp that says "Made in America." That's what I want.

That's why 2 years ago, we stood by the auto industry and kept some of our Nation's largest automakers from being sold for parts. And today, for the first time in years, the Big Three automakers are adding jobs and turning a profit and putting steel workers to work. We also told those companies, though, that they'd have to make some changes to compete. So we brought people together and set the first new fuel-mileage standards in more than 30 years. And that means fewer trips to the pump and less harmful pollution. And this plant has something to do with it, because I was just seeing some doors and some hoods made right here—more lightweight, more efficient, saves on fuel economy. And that means your business is improved as well. Everybody wins.

That's also why I announced last week a new partnership between our top engineering schools, our most innovative manufacturers, and the Federal Government to get American products from the drawing board to the factory

floor to the marketplace as quickly as possible. And today I'm proud to announce that Alcoa is joining that partnership. The idea is to create jobs now and to make sure America stays on the cutting edge of manufacturing for years to come.

Now, we also know that strengthening our manufacturing sector requires workers getting the skills and training they need. Today, there are more than four job seekers for every job opening in America. Every one job, there are four folks looking for work. But when it comes to the high-tech fields, the opposite is true: Businesses say they're having trouble finding enough skilled workers to fill the openings that they have.

And so, 3 weeks ago, we announced new commitments from businesses and universities to make it possible for 500,000 community college students—half a million students—to earn industry-accepted credentials for manufacturing jobs that companies across the country are looking to fill. So, basically, what happens is the companies, they'll say to the community colleges, here's what we need. The community colleges will design a training program that certifies that if you get through that training program and you're working hard, you are prepared and equipped to get that job. And so we're also making it easier for workers to get retrained and move up into better positions.

Now, these steps won't help solve every problem that we face. No matter what you may hear, there's no silver bullet to reverse a decade of economic challenges. We've had problems for 10 years now. It's not going to reverse overnight. But these steps will help us move forward. They'll help us grow our economy today, and they'll guarantee a better future for our children.

I know these are difficult times. And many of you probably have friends who are looking for work or family members who are looking for work or are just getting by. And when that happens, sometimes it's tempting to turn cynical and to be doubtful about the future and to start thinking maybe our best days are behind us.

But that's not the America that I know. That's not the America I see here in the Quads and in communities all across the country today. I see an America where people don't give up, where people don't quit. I see companies like Alcoa where reinvention is a part of life. Whatever the future may bring, I know you want to be a part of it. And that spirit has always been at the heart of our American story.

You know, as I was walking in, your team talked about, I guess, a saying around Alcoa, it says, "Nobody's perfect, but a team can be perfect." Well, none of us individually are perfect, but as a team, America can perfect ourselves. But we got to start working like a team. Instead of having the kind of squabbling we see in Washington all the time, everybody has got to start thinking together the way engineers and workers and the business side of Alcoa thinks together. What's our market? What's the product we want to produce? How can we make it better? How can we make the plant safer? How can we cut costs? How can we retrain our workers? Problem-solving all the time, that's what's made you successful. That's what will make America successful, by adapting and innovating, but also thinking like a team, instead of turning on each other.

And I promise you, if we continue to adapt and we continue to innovate and we work together to compete around the world, America will come back stronger than before. We will lead the way forward, and we will make the next century another great American century.

So thank you very much, Alcoa, for leading the way. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:04 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Terry E. Branstad of Iowa; and Charles "Skip" McGill, president, Local 105, United Steelworkers.

Statement on Representative Lynn C. Woolsey's Decision Not To Seek Reelection
June 28, 2011

A fierce advocate for children, families, and the people of the North Bay, Lynn Woolsey has never forgotten the people who sent her to Congress for nearly two decades. She is a leader on progressive causes and a fighter for working families, and we will miss her passionate voice in Congress. Michelle and I wish her well and join the people of California in thanking her for her many years of service.

The President's News Conference
June 29, 2011

The President. Good morning, everybody. Have a seat, please. I just want to say a few words about the economy before I take your questions.

There are a lot of folks out there who are still struggling with the effects of the recession. Many people are still looking for work or looking for a job that pays more. Families are wondering how they deal with a broken refrigerator or a busted transmission or how they're going to finance their kids' college education, and they're also worrying about the possibility of layoffs.

The struggles of middle class families were a big problem long before the recession hit in 2007. They weren't created overnight, and the truth is, our economic challenges are not going to be solved overnight. But there are more steps that we can take right now that would help businesses create jobs here in America.

Today, our administration is trying to take those steps, so we're reviewing Government regulations so that we can fix any rules in place that are an unnecessary burden on businesses. We're working with the private sector to get small businesses and startups the financing they need to grow and expand. And because of the partnership that we've launched with businesses and community colleges, 500,000 workers will be able to receive the right skills and training for manufacturing jobs in companies all across America, jobs that companies are looking to fill.

In addition to the steps that my administration can take on our own, there are also things that Congress could do right now that will help create good jobs. Right now Congress can send me a bill that would make it easier for entrepreneurs to patent a new product or idea, because we can't give innovators in other countries a big leg up when it comes to opening new businesses and creating new jobs. That's something Congress could do right now.

Right now Congress could send me a bill that puts construction workers back on the job rebuilding roads and bridges, not by having Government fund and pick every project, but by providing loans to private companies and States and local governments on the basis of merit and not politics. That's pending in Congress right now.

Right now Congress can advance a set of trade agreements that would allow American businesses to sell more of their goods and services to countries in Asia and South America, agreements that would support tens of thousands of American jobs while helping those adversely affected by trade. That's pending before Congress right now.

And right now we could give middle class families the security of knowing that the tax cut I signed in December will be there for one more year.

So there are a number of steps that my administration is taking, but there are also a number of steps that Congress could be taking right now on items that historically have had bipartisan support and that would help put more Americans back to work.

Many of these ideas have been tied up in Congress for some time. But, as I said, all of them enjoy bipartisan support and all of them would help grow the economy. So I urge Congress to act on these ideas now.

Of course, one of the most important and urgent things we can do for the economy is something that both parties are working on right now, and that's reducing our Nation's deficit. Over the last few weeks, the Vice President has been leading negotiations with Democrats and Republicans on this issue, and they've made some real progress in narrowing down the differences. As of last week, both parties had identified more than $1 trillion worth of spending cuts already.

But everyone also knows that we'll need to do more to close the deficit. We can't get to the $4 trillion in savings that we need by just cutting the 12 percent of the budget that pays for things like medical research and education funding and food inspectors and the weather service. And we can't just do it by making seniors pay more for Medicare. So we're going to need to look at the whole budget, as I said several months ago. And we've got to eliminate waste wherever we find it and make some tough decisions about worthy priorities.

And that means trimming the defense budget, while still meeting our security needs. It means we'll have to tackle entitlements, as long as we keep faith with seniors and children with disabilities by maintaining the fundamental security that Medicare and Medicaid provide. And yes, we're going to have to tackle spending in the Tax Code.

There's been a lot of discussion about revenues and raising taxes in recent weeks, so I want to be clear about what we're proposing here. I spent the last 2 years cutting taxes for ordinary Americans, and I want to extend those middle class tax cuts. The tax cuts I'm proposing we get rid of are tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, tax breaks for oil companies and hedge fund managers and corporate jet owners.

It would be nice if we could keep every tax break there is, but we've got to make some tough choices here if we want to reduce our deficit. And if we choose to keep those tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, if we choose to keep a tax break for corporate jet owners, if we choose to keep tax breaks for oil and gas companies that are making hundreds of billions of dollars, then that means we've got to cut some kids off from getting a college scholarship. That means we've got to stop funding certain grants for medical research. That means that food safety may be compromised. That means that Medicare has to bear a greater part of the burden. Those are the choices we have to make.

So the bottom line is this: Any agreement to reduce our deficit is going to require tough decisions and balanced solutions. And before we ask our seniors to pay more for health care, before we cut our children's education, before we sacrifice our commitment to the research and innovation that will help create more jobs in the economy, I think it's only fair to ask an oil company or a corporate jet owner that has done so well to give up that tax break that no other business enjoys. I don't think that's real radical. I think the majority of Americans agree with that.

So the good news is, because of the work that's been done, I think we can actually bridge our differences. I think there is a conceptual framework that would allow us to make huge progress on our debt and deficit and do so in a way that does not hurt our economy right here and right now.

And it's not often that Washington sees both parties agree on the scale and the urgency of the challenge at hand. Nobody wants to put the creditworthiness of the United States in jeopardy. Nobody wants to see the United States default. So we've got to seize this moment, and we have to seize it soon. The Vice President and I will continue these negotiations with both leaders of both parties in Congress for as long as it takes, and we will reach a deal that will require our Government to live within its means and give our businesses confidence and get this economy moving.

So with that, I will take your questions. I've got my list here. I'm starting off with Ben Feller, Associated Press.

National Debt and Deficit

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I'd like to follow up on the comments you just made as you try to reach a deal to raise the debt limit and cut the deficit. You keep saying that there needs to be this balanced approach of spending cuts and taxes. But Republicans say flatly, they won't——

The President. That they don't want a balanced approach.

Q. They don't want any tax increases, as they put it. And the House Speaker says not only that he doesn't support that, but that plan won't—will not pass the House. So my question is, will you insist, ultimately, that a deal has to include those tax increases that you just laid out? Is that an absolute red line for you? And if it is, can you explain to us how that can possibly get through the Congress?

The President. Look, I think that what we've seen in negotiations here in Washington is a lot of people say a lot of things to satisfy their base or to get on cable news, but that, hopefully, leaders at a certain point rise to the occasion and they do the right thing for the American people. And that's what I expect to happen this time. Call me naive, but my expectation is that leaders are going to lead.

Now, I just want to be clear about what's at stake here. The Republicans say they want to reduce the deficit. Every single observer who's not an elected official, who's not a politician, says we can't reduce our deficit in the scale and scope that we need to without having a balanced approach that looks at everything.

Democrats have to accept some painful spending cuts that hurt some of our constituencies and we may not like. And we've shown a willingness to do that for the greater good. To say, look, there are some things that are good programs that are nice to have, we can't afford them right now.

I, as Commander in Chief, have to have difficult conversations with the Pentagon saying, you know what, there's fat here, we're going to have to trim it out. And Bob Gates has already done a good job identifying $400 billion in cuts, but we're going to do more. And I promise you the preference of the Pentagon would be not to cut any more, because they feel like they've already given.

So we're going to have to look at entitlements, and that's always difficult politically. But I've been willing to say we need to see where we can reduce the costs of health care spending and Medicare and Medicaid in the out-years, not by shifting costs on to seniors, as some have proposed, but rather by actually reducing those costs. But even if we're doing it in a smart way, that's still tough politics. But it's the right thing to do.

So the question is, if everybody else is willing to take on their sacred cows and do tough things in order to achieve the goal of real deficit reduction, then I think it would be hard for the Republicans to stand there and say that the tax break for corporate jets is sufficiently important that we're not willing to come to the table and get a deal done. Or we're so concerned about protecting oil and gas subsidies for oil companies that are making money hand over fist, that's the reason we're not going to come to a deal.

I don't think that's a sustainable position. And the truth of the matter is, if you talk to Republicans who are not currently in office, like Alan Simpson who cochaired my bipartisan commission, he doesn't think that's a sustainable position. Pete Domenici, Republican, cochaired something with Alice Rivlin, the Democrat, says that's—he doesn't think that's a sustainable position. You can't reduce the deficit to the levels that it needs to be reduced without having some revenue in the mix.

And the revenue we're talking about isn't coming out of the pockets of middle class families that are struggling. It's coming out of folks who are doing extraordinarily well and are enjoying the lowest tax rates since before I was born.

If you are a wealthy CEO or a health—hedge fund manager in America right now, your taxes are lower than they have ever been. They're lower than they've been since the 1950s. And you can afford it. You'll still be able to ride on your corporate jet; you're just going to have to pay a little more.

And if we—I just want to emphasize what I said earlier. If we do not have revenues, that means there are a bunch of kids out there who are not getting college scholarships. If we do not have those revenues, then the kinds of cuts that would be required might compromise the National Weather Service. It means that we would not be funding critical medical research. It means that food inspection might be compromised. And I've said to some of the Republican leaders, you go talk to your constituents, the Republican constituents, and ask them are they willing to compromise their kids' safety so that some corporate jet owner continues to get a tax break. And I'm pretty sure what the answer would be.

So we're going to keep on having these conversations. And my belief is, is that the Republican leadership in Congress will, hopefully, sooner rather than later, come to the conclusion that they need to make the right decisions for the country, that everybody else has been willing to move off their maximalist position; they need to do the same.

Q. You think they'll ultimately give ground on that?

The President. My expectation is that they'll do the responsible thing.

Chuck Todd [NBC News].

Libya

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. There have been a lot of questions about the constitutionality—constitutional interpretations of a few decisions you've made, so I'll just simply ask: Do you believe the War Powers Act is constitutional? Do you believe that the debt limit is constitutional, the idea that Congress can do this? And do you believe that marriage is a civil right?

The President. Well, that was a hodgepodge. [*Laughter*] Chuck, we're going to assign you to the Supreme Court, man. [*Laughter*]

I'm not a Supreme Court Justice, so I'm not going to put my constitutional law professor hat on here. Let me focus on, initially, the issue of Libya. I want to talk about the substance of Libya because there's been all kinds of noise about process and congressional consultation and so forth. Let's talk about concretely what's happened.

Muammar Qadhafi, who, prior to Usama bin Laden, was responsible for more American deaths than just about anybody on the planet, was threatening to massacre his people. And as part of an international coalition, under a U.N. mandate that is almost unprecedented, we went in and took out air defense systems so that an international coalition could provide a no-fly zone, could protect—provide humanitarian protection to the people on the ground.

I spoke to the American people about what we would do. I said there would be no troops on the ground. I said that we would not be carrying the lion's share of this operation, but as members of NATO, we would be supportive of it because it's in our national security interests and also because it's the right thing to do.

We have done exactly what I said we would do. We have not put any boots on the ground. And our allies—who, historically, we've complained aren't willing to carry enough of the load when it comes to NATO operations—have carried a big load when it comes to these NATO operations. And as a consequence, we've protected thousands of people in Libya; we have not seen a single U.S. casualty; there's no risks of additional escalation. This operation is limited in time and in scope.

So I said to the American people, here's our narrow mission. We have carried out that narrow mission in exemplary fashion. And throughout this process we consulted with Congress. We've had 10 hearings on it. We've sent reams of information about what the operations are. I've had all the Members of Congress over to talk about it. So a lot of this fuss is politics.

And if you look substantively at what we've done, we have done exactly what we said to do, under a U.N. mandate, and we have protected thousands of lives in the process. And as a consequence, a guy who was a state sponsor of terrorist operations against the United States of America is pinned down, and the noose is tightening around him.

Now, when you look at the history of the War Powers Resolution, it came up after the Viet-

nam war in which we had half a million soldiers there, tens of thousands of lives lost, hundreds of billions of dollars spent, and Congress said, you know what, we don't want something like that happening again. So if you're going to start getting us into those kinds of commitments, you've got to consult with Congress beforehand.

And I think that such consultation is entirely appropriate. But do I think that our actions in any way violate the War Powers Resolution? The answer is no. So I don't even have to get to the constitutional question.

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. There may be a time in which there was a serious question as to whether or not the War Powers Resolution act was constitutional. I don't have to get to the question.

We have engaged in a limited operation to help a lot of people against one of the worst tyrants in the world—somebody who nobody should want to defend—and we should be sending a unified message to this guy that he should step down and give his people a fair chance to live their lives without fear. And this suddenly becomes the cause celebre for some folks in Congress? Come on.

So you had, what, a three-parter? [*Laughter*] What are the other two?

Q. There is some question about the constitutionality of the War Powers Act.

The President. I'm just saying I don't have to reach it. That's a good legal answer.

Q. How about marriage being a civil right?

Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgender Equality

The President. Let me start by saying that this administration, under my direction, has consistently said we cannot discriminate as a country against people on the basis of sexual orientation. And we have done more in the 2½ years that I've been in here than the previous 43 Presidents to uphold that principle, whether it's ending "don't ask, don't tell," making sure that gay and lesbian partners can visit each other in hospitals, making sure that Federal benefits can be provided to same-sex couples. Across the board—hate crimes—we have made sure that that is a central principle of this administration, because I think it's a central principle of America.

Now, what we've also done is we've said that DOMA, the Defense of Marriage Act, is unconstitutional. And so we've said we cannot defend the Federal Government poking its nose into what States are doing and putting the thumb on the scale against same-sex couples.

What I've seen happen over the last several years, and what happened in New York last week, I think, was a good thing, because what you saw was the people of New York having a debate, talking through these issues. It was contentious, it was emotional, but ultimately, they made a decision to recognize civil marriages. And I think that's exactly how things should work.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—marriage is a civil right?

The President. And so I think it is important for us to work through these issues, because each community is going to be different and each State is going to be different—to work through them. In the meantime, we filed a—we filed briefs before the Supreme Court that say we think that any discrimination against gays, lesbians, transgenders is subject to heightened scrutiny, and we don't think that DOMA is unconstitutional [constitutional].* And so I think the combination of what States are doing, what the courts are doing, the actions that we're taking administratively, all are how the process should work.

Q. Are you at all uncomfortable that there could be different rules in different States, you know, and for somebody to make the argument that that's what we saw during segregation?

The President. Chuck, I think what you're seeing is a profound recognition on the part of the American people that gays and lesbians and transgender persons are our brothers, our sisters, our children, our cousins, our friends, our coworkers, and that they've got to be treated like every other American. And I think that principle will win out. It's not going to be

* White House correction.

perfectly smooth, and it turns out that the President—I've discovered since I've been in this office—can't dictate precisely how this process moves. But I think we're moving in a direction of greater equality, and I think that's a good thing.

Julianna [Julianna Goldberg, Bloomberg News].

National Debt and Deficit/Job Growth/Tax Reform/Trade/Boeing Company

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I only have a two-parter. [*Laughter*]

The President. Thanks.

Q. Are you concerned that the current debate over debt and deficits is preventing you from taking the kind of decisive and more balanced action needed to create jobs in this country, which is the number-one concern for Americans?

And also, one of the impediments to job growth that the business community repeatedly cites is the regulatory environment. So do you think that the NLRB complaint against Boeing, that that has created some of the—is an example of the kinds of regulations that chill job growth and also that you yourself has—have called "just plain dumb"?

The President. I think it's important to understand that deficit reduction, debt reduction, should be part of an overall package for job growth over the long term. It's not the only part of it, but it's an important part of it.

So as I mentioned at the top, I think it's important for us to look at rebuilding our transportation infrastructure in this country. That could put people back to work right now, construction workers back to work right now. And it would get done work that America needs to get done. We used to have the best roads, the best bridges, the best airports. We don't anymore. And that's not good for our long-term competitiveness.

So we could put people to work right now and make sure that we're in a good position to win the future as well. I think——

Q. ——spending and—[*inaudible*].

The President. I'm going to get to it. I think that it's important for us to look at the Tax Code and figure out, are there ways that we can simplify it and also build on the work that we've already done, for example, saying to small businesses or startup businesses, you don't have to pay capital gains when you're in startup mode, because we want you to get out there and start a business. That's important. Making sure that SBA is helping to get financing to small businesses, that's important.

So there are a whole range of things that we can be doing. I think these trade deals will be important, because right now South Korea frankly has a better deal when it comes to our trading relationship than we do. Part of the reason I want to pass this trade deal is you see a whole bunch of Korean cars here in the United States and you don't see any American cars in Korea. So let's rebalance that trading relationship. That's why we should get this passed.

So there are a range of things that we could be doing right now. Deficit and debt reduction should be seen as part of that overall process, because I think if businesses feel confident that we've got our act together here in Washington, that not only is the Government not going to default, but we're also preparing for a future in which the population is getting older—and we're going to have more expenses on the Medicare side and Social Security—that businesses will feel more confident about investing here in the United States of America.

So I don't think they're contradictory. And as I've said before, certainly in my job, but, I think, Congress as well, they've got to be able to walk and chew gum at the same time. So we can focus on jobs at the same time as we're focusing on debt and deficit reduction.

Now, one of the things that my administration has talked about is, is there, in fact, a bunch of—a tangle of regulations out there that are preventing businesses from growing and expanding as quickly as they should? Keep in mind that the business community is always complaining about regulations. When unemployment is at 3 percent and they're making record profits, they're going to still complain about regulations because, frankly, they want to be able to do whatever they think is going to maximize their profits.

I've got an obligation to make sure that we're upholding smart regulations that protect our air and protect our water and protect our food. If you're flying on a plane, you want to make sure that there are some regulations in place to assure safety in air travel, right? So there are some core regulations that we've got to maintain.

But what I have done—and this is unprecedented, by the way, no administration has done this before—is I've said to each agency, don't just look at current regulations—or don't just look at future regulations, regulations that we're proposing, let's go backwards and look at regulations that are already on the books, and if they don't make sense, let's get rid of them. And we are in the process of doing that, and we've already identified changes that could potentially save billions of dollars for companies over the next several years.

Now, you asked specifically about one decision that was made by the National Labor Relations Board, the NLRB, and this relates to Boeing. Essentially, the NLRB made a finding that Boeing had not followed the law in making a decision to move a plant. And it's an independent agency. It's going before a judge. So I don't want to get into the details of the case. I don't know all the facts. That's going to be up to a judge to decide.

What I do know is this: that as a general proposition, companies need to have the freedom to relocate. They have to follow the law, but that's part of our system. And if they're choosing to relocate here in the United States, that's a good thing. And what it doesn't make—what, I think, defies common sense would be a notion that we would be shutting down a plant or laying off workers because labor and management can't come to a sensible agreement.

So my hope is, is that even as this thing is working its way through, everybody steps back for a second and says, look, if jobs are being created here in the United States, let's make sure that we're encouraging that. And we can't afford to have labor and management fighting all the time, at a time when we're competing against Germany and China and other countries that want to sell goods all around the world. And obviously, the airplane industry is an area where we still have a huge advantage, and I want to make sure that we keep it. Okay?

Mark Landler [New York Times].

Detention and Prosecution of Alleged Terrorists

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Yesterday Admiral McRaven testified before Congress that he was concerned that there wasn't a clear procedure to be followed if a terrorist were captured alive abroad. The administration has also been clear that it doesn't want to continue to send suspected terrorists to Guantanamo.

What message do you have for American men and women in uniform who are undertaking missions, like the very risky one to capture and kill bin Laden, about what they should do in the event that they capture someone alive? And does the lack of these clear procedures raise the risk that forces might be more inclined to kill suspected terrorists in the field, rather than capture them alive, thus depriving the U.S. of the intelligence that they could provide?

The President. Well, first of all, my top priority in each and every one of these situations is to make sure that we're apprehending those who would attack the United States; that we are getting all the intelligence that we can out of these individuals, in a way that's consistent with due process of law; and that we try them, we prosecute them, in a way that's consistent with rule of law.

And frankly, there are going to be different dispositions of the case depending on the situation. And there are going to be some times where a military commission may be appropriate. There are going to be some times where Article III courts are appropriate in terms of prosecution. And we do have a process to work through all the agencies—Department of Defense, Department of Justice, FBI, anybody else who might be involved in these kinds of operations—to think through on a case-by-case basis how a particular individual should be dealt with.

And I think that when it comes to our men and women in uniform who might be carrying

out these missions, the instructions are not going to be based on whether or not the lawyers can sort out how we detain them or how we prosecute them. Their mission is to make sure that they apprehend the individual; they do so safely with minimum risk to American lives. And that's always going to be the priority, is just carrying out the mission. And that message is sent consistently to our men and women in uniform anytime they start carrying out one of these missions.

But I think it's important to understand, and the American people need to be assured, that any time we initiate a mission like this, our top priorities are making sure this person is not able to carry out attacks against the United States and that we're able to obtain actionable intelligence from those individuals. And so that mitigates against this danger that you're suggesting that our main goal is going to be to kill these individuals as opposed to potentially capturing them. Okay?

Mike Emanuel, FOX.

Afghanistan

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Last week when you gave your Afghanistan drawdown speech, the word "victory," in terms of the overall war in Afghanistan, was not in your speech. So I'm wondering, sir, if you can define for the 100,000 troops you have in harm's way in Afghanistan "victory" in the war and for their families as well, sir.

The President. Well, I didn't use "victory" in my West Point speech either. What I said was we can be successful in our mission, which is narrowly drawn, and that is to make sure that Al Qaida cannot attack the United States of America or our allies or our interests overseas and to make sure that we have an Afghan Government that—and an Afghan people that can provide for their own security.

We are being successful in those missions. And the reason that we're in a position to draw down 10,000 troops this year and a total of 33,000 troops by the end of next summer is precisely because of the extraordinary work of our men and women in uniform. What they've been able to do is to severely cripple Al Qaida's capacities.

Obviously, bin Laden got the most attention, but even before the bin Laden operation, we had decimated the middle ranks and some of the upper ranks of Al Qaida. They're having a great deal of difficulty operating, a great deal of difficulty communicating and financing themselves, and we are going to keep the pressure on. And in part that's because of the extraordinary sacrifices that have been made by our men and women in uniform in Afghanistan.

What we've also been able to do is to ramp up the training of Afghan forces. So we've got an additional 100,000 Afghan troops, both army and police, that have been trained as a consequence of this surge. And that is going to give the Afghans more capacity to defend themselves, because it is in our national interest to make sure that you did not have a collapse of Afghanistan in which extremist elements could flood the zone once again and over time Al Qaida might be in a position to rebuild itself.

So what I laid out was a plan in which we are going to be drawing down our troops from Afghanistan after 10 very long years and an enormous sacrifice by our troops. But we will draw them in a—draw them down in a responsible way that will allow Afghanistan to defend itself and will give us the operational capacity to continue to put pressure on Al Qaida until that network is entirely defeated.

Q. I'm sure that you've been apprised of the attack on the Inter-Continental Hotel yesterday, sir. And does that concern you that Afghan forces may not be able to step up if these guys are able to attack a high-profile target in the nation's capital?

The President. Well, keep in mind the drawdown hasn't begun. So we understood that Afghanistan is a dangerous place, that the Taliban is still active, and that there are still going to be events like this on occasion. The question is, in terms of overall trend, is Afghan capacity increasing?

Kabul, for example, which contains a huge proportion of the Afghan population as a whole, has been largely policed by Afghan

forces for quite some time. And they've done a reasonably good job. Kabul is much safer than it was, and Afghan forces in Kabul are much more capable than they were.

That doesn't mean that there are not going to be events like this potentially taking place, and that will probably go on for some time. Our work is not done. But as I said in my speech, the tide of war is receding. We have shifted to a transition phase. And much like we've seen in Iraq—where we've drawn down our troops, the remainder of our troops will be coming out by the end of this year, but Iraq has been able to maintain a democratic government and to tamp down violence there—we think a similar approach makes sense in Afghanistan.

But even in Iraq, you still see the occasional attack. These are still countries that are digging themselves out of a lot of war, a lot of conflict. They're dangerous places. And so they're not going to be perfectly safe, even if we were there. But we can improve the chances for the Afghan people to defend themselves.

Jim Sciutto [ABC News].

Libya

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You're aware that Senators Kerry and McCain have a proposal on the Senate floor to give you the leeway to continue operations in Libya for a further year. You've just said that this, from the beginning, has been an operation limited in time and scope. Initially, you said days, not weeks. Are you prepared, are the American people prepared for this operation, with American support, to continue for a further year? And is there any other definition of success than Qadhafi being removed from power?

The President. Well, first of all, Jim, just a slight correction. What I told the American people was that the initial phase where Americans were in the lead would take days, perhaps weeks. And that's exactly what happened, right? I mean, after around 2 weeks, a little less than 2 weeks, we had transitioned where NATO had taken full control of the operation. So promise made, promise kept.

Second, I think when you have the former Republican nominee for President, John McCain, and the former nominee for President on the Democratic side, John Kerry, coming together to support what we're doing in Libya, that should tell the American people that this is important. And I very much appreciate their efforts in that regard.

Third, when it comes to our definitions of success, the U.N. mandate has said that we are there to make sure that you do not see a massacre directed against Libyan civilians by the Libyan regime. The Libyan regime's capacity has been greatly reduced as a consequence of our operation. That's already been successful. What we've seen both in the east and in the west is that opposition forces have been able to mobilize themselves and start getting organized, and people are starting to see the possibility of a more peaceful future on the horizon.

What is also true is, as long as Qadhafi is still presenting himself as the head of the Libyan Government and as long as he still controls large numbers of troops, the Libyan people are going to be in danger of counteroffensives and of retribution. So there is no doubt that Qadhafi stepping down from power is—from the international community's perspective—going to be the primary way that we can assure that the overall mission of Libya's people being protected is accomplished.

And I just want to point out—I know it's something you know—the International Criminal Court identified Qadhafi as having violated international law, having committed war crimes. What we've seen is reports of troops engaging in horrible acts, including potentially using rape as a weapon of war. And so when you have somebody like that in charge of large numbers of troops, I think it'd be hard for us to feel confident that the Libyan people are going to be protected unless he steps down.

Now, what that means, whether there's the possibility of Libyans arriving at some sort of political settlement, that, I think, is something that ultimately the Libyan people are going to have to make a decision about, because the international community is there in service of that broader goal, of a peaceful Libya.

Q. Would you accept a political settlement with him involved as success from the American perspective?

The President. I would accept him stepping down so that he is not directing armed forces against the Libyan people. He needs to step down. He needs to go.

Laura Meckler [Wall Street Journal].

National Debt and Deficit/Tax Reform/National Economy

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. In these debt talks, would you accept—would you like to see some sort of tax breaks aimed at stimulating the economy, even though that would of course add to the deficit itself?

And I'd also like to follow up on one of your earlier answers about same-sex marriage. You said that it's a positive step that so many States, including New York, are moving towards that. Does that mean that you personally now do support same-sex marriage, putting aside what individual States decide? Is that your personal view?

The President. I'm not going to make news on that today. [*Laughter*] Good try though.

Q. Why not?

The President. And the—with respect to the deficit and debt talks and where we need to go, I do think it's important, since we're looking at how do we reduce the debt and deficit both in a 10-year window as well as beyond a 10-year window, to understand that one of the most important things we can do for debt and deficit reduction is to grow the economy.

And so if there are steps that in the short term may reduce the amount of cash in the treasury, but in the long term mean that we're growing at 3.5 percent instead of 2.5 percent, then those ideas are worth exploring.

Obviously, that was what we did in December during the lame duck session, when Democrats and Republicans came together and we said, you know what, a payroll tax cut makes sense in order to boost the economy, unemployment insurance makes sense in order to boost the economy. All that stuff puts money in people's pockets at a time when they're still struggling to dig themselves out of this recession. And so the American people have an extra thousand dollars, on average, in their pockets because of the tax cuts that we initiated. And that has helped cushion some of the tough stuff that happened in the first 6 months of this year, including the effects on oil prices as a consequence of what happened in the Middle East as well as what happened in Japan.

I think that it makes perfect sense for us to take a look at can we extend the payroll tax, for example, an additional year, and other tax breaks for business investment that could make a big difference in terms of creating more jobs right now.

What we need to do is to restore business confidence and the confidence of the American people that we're on track, that we're not going to get there right away, that this is a tough slog, but that we still are moving forward. And I think that it makes sense, as we're looking at an overall package, to see, are there some things that we can do to sustain the recovery, so long as the overall package achieves our goals: the goals that I set out, which is $4 trillion within a 10- to 12-year window, and making sure that we're bending the costs of things like health care over the long term?

Q. I'm sorry, I know you don't want to say anything further on the same-sex marriage issue, but what you said before really led me to believe that that's what is in your personal mind. And I'm wondering what's the distinction you're drawing.

The President. Laura, I think this has been asked and answered. I'll keep on giving you the same answer until I give you a different one, all right? And that won't be today. [*Laughter*]

Q. That's going to be the quote. We all use it—[*inaudible*].

The President. Yes, exactly. I thought you'd like that one. [*Laughter*]

Antonieta Cadiz [La Opinion]? There you are.

Immigration Reform/Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives Bureau's Gun Trafficking Operation

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. Yes.

Q. First, if you receive a mandatory E-Verify bill only without legalization, are you planning to veto that deal?

And second, on "Fast and Furious," Members of Congress and the Government of Mexico are still waiting for answers. Are you planning to replace ATF leadership? And when can we expect the results of the current investigation?

The President. On the second question, as you know, my Attorney General has made clear that he certainly would not have ordered gun running to be able to pass through into Mexico. The investigation is still pending. I'm not going to comment on a current investigation. I've made very clear my views that that would not be an appropriate step by the ATF, and we got to find out how that happened. As soon as the investigation is completed, I think appropriate actions will be taken.

With respect to E-Verify, we need comprehensive immigration reform. I've said it before. I will say it again. I will say it next week, and I'll say it 6 months from now. We've got to have a system that makes sure that we uphold our tradition as a nation of laws and that we also uphold our tradition as a nation of immigrants. And that means tough border security, going after employers that are illegally hiring and exploiting workers, making sure that we also have a pathway for legal status for those who are living in the shadows right now.

We may not be able to get everything that I would like to see in a package, but we have to have a balanced package. E-Verify can be an important enforcement tool if it's not riddled with errors, if U.S. citizens are protected, because what I don't want is a situation in which employers are forced to set up a system that they can't be certain works. And we don't want to expose employers to the risk where they end up rejecting a qualified candidate for a job because the list says that that person is an illegal immigrant, and it turns out that the person isn't an illegal immigrant. That wouldn't be fair for the employee and would probably get the employer in trouble as well.

So I think the goal right now is to let's continue to see if we can perfect the E-Verify system. Let's make sure that we have safeguards in place to prevent the kind of scenarios that I talked about. But let's also not lose sight of some of the other components to immigration reform. For example, making sure that "DREAM Act" kids—kids who have grown up here in the United States, think of themselves as Americans, who are not legal through no fault of their own, and who are ready to invest and give back to our country and go to school and fight in our military and start businesses here—let's make sure that those kids can stay. We need to have a more balanced approach than just a verification system. Okay?

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. I don't have an answer as to whether the investigation is completed yet, and it wouldn't be appropriate for me to comment on the investigation if I don't—if it's not yet completed.

Jessica Yellin [CNN]. Congratulations, your first question here.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. No pressure. You're going to do great. [*Laughter*]

National Debt and Deficit

Q. Thank you. Your administration has laid out four different dates by which you've said that the debt ceiling must be raised or the U.S. would face potential dire consequences. Three of those dates have come and gone, and we haven't faced financial calamity. Some of your critics have argued that these are then scare tactics to force a deal. So why should the American people believe that the August 2 deadline is the final deadline by which a deal must be raised? And would you also spell out for us what you believe will happen if the debt ceiling is not raised by that date?

The President. Jessica, let's be clear. We haven't given out four different dates. We have given out dates that are markers for us getting into trouble. It's the equivalent of you're driving down the street and the red—the yellow light starts flashing. The yellow light is flashing. Now, it hasn't been a red light yet. So what Tim Geithner has said is, technically speaking, we're in a position now where we're having to

do a whole bunch of things to make sure that our bills are paid.

By August 2, we run out of tools to make sure that all our bills are paid. So that is a hard deadline. And I want everybody to understand that this is a jobs issue. This is not an abstraction. If the United States Government, for the first time, cannot pay its bills, if it defaults, then the consequences for the U.S. economy will be significant and unpredictable. And that is not a good thing.

We don't know how capital markets will react. But if capital markets suddenly decide, you know what, the U.S. Government doesn't pay its bills, so we're going to start pulling our money out, and the U.S. Treasury has to start to raise interest rates in order to attract more money to pay off our bills, that means higher interest rates for businesses; that means higher interest rates for consumers. So all the headwinds that we're already experiencing in terms of the recovery will get worse.

That's not my opinion. I think that's a consensus opinion. And that means that job growth will be further stymied, it will be further hampered, as a consequence of that decision. So that's point number one.

Point number two, I want to address what I've been hearing from some quarters, which is, well, maybe this debt limit thing is not really that serious; we can just pay interest on the debt. This idea has been floating around in some Republican circles.

This is the equivalent of me saying, you know what, I will choose to pay my mortgage, but I'm not going to pay my car note. Or I'm going to pay my car note, but I'm not going to pay my student loan. Now, a lot of people in really tough situations are having to make those tough decisions. But for the U.S. Government to start picking and choosing like that is not going to inspire a lot of confidence.

Moreover, which bills are we going to decide to pay? These guys have said, well, maybe we just pay the interest on—for bondholders. So are we really going to start paying interest to Chinese who hold Treasurys, and we're not going to pay folks their Social Security checks? Or we're not going to pay to veterans for their disability checks? I mean, which bills, which obligations, are we going to say we don't have to pay?

And last point I want to make about this. These are bills that Congress ran up. The money has been spent. The obligations have been made. So this isn't a situation—I think the American people have to understand this—this is not a situation where Congress is going to say, okay, we won't buy this car or we won't take this vacation. They took the vacation. They bought the car. And now they're saying maybe we don't have to pay or we don't have to pay as fast as we said we were going to or—that's not how responsible families act. And we're the greatest nation on Earth, and we can't act that way.

So this is urgent, and it needs to get settled.

Q. So is August 2 a yellow light or a red light?

The President. I think people should think of—look, I'm the President of the United States, and I want to make sure that I am not engaging in scare tactics. And I've tried to be responsible and somewhat restrained so that folks don't get spooked.

August 2 is a very important date. And there's no reason why we can't get this done now. We know what the options are out there. This is not a technical problem any longer. This is a matter of Congress going ahead and biting the bullet and making some tough decisions. Because we know what the decisions are. We've identified what spending cuts are possible. We've identified what defense cuts are possible. We've identified what health care cuts are possible. We've identified what loopholes in the Tax Code can be closed that would also raise revenue. We've identified what the options are. And the question now is are we going to step up and get this done.

And you know, Malia and Sasha generally finish their homework a day ahead of time. Malia is 13; Sasha is 10.

Q. Impressive.

The President. It is impressive. They don't wait until the night before. They're not pulling all-nighters. [*Laughter*] They're 13 and 10.

Congress can do the same thing. If you know you've got to do something, just do it.

And I've got to say, I'm very amused when I start hearing comments about, well, the President needs to show more leadership on this. Let me tell you something. Right after we finished dealing with the Government shutdown—averting a Government shutdown, I called the leaders here together. I said we've got to get done—get this done. I put Vice President Biden in charge of a process—that, by the way, has made real progress—but these guys have met, worked through all of these issues. I met with every single caucus for an hour to an hour and a half each: Republican Senators, Democratic Senators; Republican House, Democratic House. I've met with the leaders multiple times. At a certain point, they need to do their job.

And so this thing, which is just not on the level, where we have meetings and discussions, and we're working through process, and when they decide they're not happy with the fact that at some point you've got to make a choice, they just all step back and say, well, you know, the President needs to get this done. They need to do their job.

Now is the time to go ahead and make the tough choices. That's why they're called leaders. And I've already shown that I'm willing to make some decisions that are very tough and will give my base of voters further reason to give me a hard time. But it's got to be done.

And so there's no point in procrastinating. There's no point in putting it off. We've got to get this done. And if by the end of this week, we have not seen substantial progress, then I think Members of Congress need to understand we are going to start having to cancel things and stay here until we get it done.

They're in one week; they're out one week. And then they're saying: "Obama has got to step in. You need to be here." I've been here. I've been doing Afghanistan and bin Laden and the Greek crisis. You stay here. Let's get it done.

All right. I think you know my feelings about that. [*Laughter*]

Caren Bohan [Reuters].

National Debt and Deficit/National Economy

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You talked about the payroll tax holiday and possibly extending that. Are you worried, though, that by adding a discussion of short-term measures on the economy into these discussions about long-term deficit reductions that that may complicate the conversation and make it harder to pass a debt limit?

The President. I will—let me put it this way. If we've got a good deal on debt and deficit reduction that focuses not just on the 10-year window, but also the long term, we will get it done. And then we can argue about some other things, because I think that's very important.

I will say that precisely because tough votes in Congress are often avoided, that it may make sense to also deal with something like a payroll tax cut at the same time, because it does have budget implications and the American people need to know that we're focused on jobs and not just on deficit reduction, even though, as I said, deficit reduction helps to serve the job agenda. I think they want to have some confidence that we've got a plan that's helping right now.

But I don't think it should be a complicating factor, because if Mitch McConnell and John Boehner came to me and said, all right, we're ready to make a deal, here's a balanced approach to debt and deficit reduction, but we want to argue about payroll tax cuts later—they're not set to expire until the end of this year—if that was a situation that they presented, then I think we would have a serious conversation about that. I would not discount that completely.

I do think that the steps that I talked about to deal with job growth and economic growth right now are vitally important to deficit reduction. Just as deficit reduction is important to grow the economy and to create jobs, well, creating jobs and growing the economy also helps reduce the deficit. If we just increased the growth rate by one percentage point, that would drastically bring down the long-term projections of the deficit, because people are paying more into the coffers and fewer people

are drawing unemployment insurance. It makes a huge difference.

And this may be sort of a good place to wrap up. You know, every day I get letters from folks all around the country who show incredible resilience, incredible determination, but they are having a very, very tough time. They're losing their homes. Some have lost their businesses. Some have lost work and have not been able to find jobs for months, maybe a year, maybe a year and a half. And they feel some desperation. And some folks who are working just are having a tough time paying the bills because they haven't seen their wages or incomes go up in 10 years, and the costs of everything else have gone up.

And every day that weighs on me. Every minute of every day that weighs on me. Because I ran for President precisely to make sure that we righted this ship and we start once again creating a situation where middle class families and people who aspire to be in the middle class, if they're working hard, then they're living a better life.

Now, these structural changes in our economy that have been going on for a decade—in some cases, longer—they're not going to be solved overnight. But we know what to do. We know that if we are educating our kids well, then they're going to be more competitive. We know that if we are investing in things like infrastructure, it pays off.

I was in Alcoa, in Iowa, one of our most successful companies. They took a big hit during the recession, but they still invested $90 million in new equipment in a plant that makes airplane wings and parts for automobiles. And they've bounced back. They've hired back all their people and are increasing market share because they made those investments.

Well, just like a company like Alcoa, America has got to make some investments. We know that we've got to get control of our deficit. There are some things that aren't going to solve all our problems but can make progress right now. And the question is whether or not Democrats and Republicans are willing to put aside the expedience of short-term politics in order to get it done.

And these folks are counting on us. They desperately want to believe that their leadership is thinking about them and not playing games. And I think that if all the leadership here in Washington has the faces and the stories of those families in mind, then we will solve this debt limit issue, we will put in place steps like a payroll tax cut and infrastructure development, we'll continue to fund education, we'll hold true to our commitment to our seniors.

These are solvable problems, but it does require us just getting out of the short-term and frankly selfish approach that sometimes politics breeds. We've got to think a bit long term. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:40 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Alan K. Simpson, Cochair, National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform; Pete V. Domenici and Alice M. Rivlin, cochairs, Bipartisan Policy Center's Debt Reduction Task Force; and Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. A reporter referred to Vice Adm. William H. McRaven, USN, commander, Joint Special Operations Command.

Remarks Honoring the 2010 Women's National Basketball Association Champion Seattle Storm
June 29, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody! Everybody, please have a seat. We arranged for a gorgeous day here. Give it up for the 2010 WNBA champions, the Seattle Storm. Congratulations, Coach, on winning a second title.

We've got some big fans in the house today. The former Governor of Washington State,

current Commerce Secretary, soon-to-be Ambassador to China—that's all one person—Gary Locke is here with his beautiful wife. Secretary of Health and Human Services and former college basketball star Kathleen Sebelius is in the house. The wonderful Senator from Washington State, Patty Murray is here. There she is. And the former county executive out in Seattle, who's now Deputy Secretary at HUD, Ron Sims is in the house.

A few weeks ago, WNBA tipped off its 15th season. And in that time, it has become the most successful women's professional sports league in the world. Attendance is up. Ratings are up. Basketball is now the most popular sport for girls in the Nation. That's worth applauding. To WNBA President Laurel Richie and everyone who else make—everybody else who makes this possible, congratulations. We are very, very proud.

Today, though, is about the Storm. Three years ago, when this team's future in Seattle was uncertain, four season ticket holders joined forces to become co-owners. Now they're also the first all-female ownership group in American history to win a championship. Owners, wave your hands.

Congratulations to Coach Brian: three winning seasons in a row, 2010 Coach of the Year, championship ring. Not bad. And he had a special team to coach. They tied the record for the most regular-season wins, went undefeated at home, became the first team in WNBA history to go a perfect 7–0 in the playoffs on the way to the title.

And this was no fluke. It was the result of true teamwork and unselfish play. When you meet these women, you can't help but be struck by their humility. You ask them how they'd describe a champion, and they say things like, "Somebody that makes the people around them better."

There's guard Tanisha Wright, who, when asked that same question, said, "Tanisha Wright." [*Laughter*] But the rest are humble.

Lauren Jackson, who couldn't be here today, but was there every time she was needed last year, picked up her third WNBA MVP award and her first Finals MVP award. Forward Camille Little iced the championship game by draining two clutch free throws with 6 seconds left. Swin Cash and Sue Bird—they're no strangers to the White House—both know something about perfection from their time playing college ball at UConn.

In fact, we can't get rid of Swin. [*Laughter*] I think she's got a cot here somewhere. She was here as part of the Detroit Shock championship team. She volunteered to read to children at an Easter egg roll. She helped out with our Father's Day mentoring barbecue. So Swin, thank you for going above and beyond the call of duty.

You see, the Storm family understands that being a champion doesn't stop when you step off the court. That's why they're playing their part in the life of Seattle communities by running healthy lifestyle programs for girls and reading and mentoring in the schools.

And today they're bringing that commitment here to the White House. After we're done, they're going to hold a clinic for young people on the basketball court—young people, go ahead and wave—as part of the First Lady's "Let's Move!" initiative and the WNBA Fit program.

And I was telling Coach, as somebody who had an extraordinary time this year coaching a couple of games of Sasha's, I can tell you nothing gets me more stressed—[*laughter*]—but also nothing gave me more satisfaction than seeing young girls get confidence and improve and learn how to be competitive and still good sports. It is just wonderful.

And since I'm usually surrounded by strong women in this house, seeing these young ladies behind us is a special pleasure. Because Michelle and I are always trying to teach our girls to set their sights high for themselves, expectations high for themselves, and we tell them if they work hard and do right, there's nothing they can't achieve.

So as a father, I thank this team for reaffirming that sentiment and for setting a good example for every young girl with big dreams. And as a basketball fan, congratulations on a thrilling year, and good luck next year.

All right? All right, we're going to take a picture.

We going to move this out? Thank you, guys.

[*At this point, White House staff began to remove the podium, but were interrupted by the President, who continued his remarks as follows.*]

The President. Coach, you want to say anything? Let him—[*inaudible*]. He won all these——

Head Coach Brian Agler. Well, first of all, President Obama, thank you for having us. It's a special moment for us and our organization, and we've got a special group here. And Lauren Jackson is not here today, but we miss her. She's having surgery tomorrow, as a matter of fact. So our wishes with—are with her, but we'll continue on and be a strong team, and we'll be competitive this year.

So thank you so much.

The President. Thank you. Fantastic. Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:07 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mona Lee Locke, wife of U.S. Ambassador-designate to China Gary F. Locke; and Dawn Trudeau, Lisa Brummel, and Ginny Gilder, co-owners, Anne Levinson, former co-owner, Lauren Jackson, forward/center, Swin Cash, forward, and Sue Bird, guard, Seattle Storm.

Remarks at a Reception Honoring Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month

June 29, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody! Hello. Welcome to the White House.

Nothing ruins a good party like a long speech from a politician. [*Laughter*] So I'm going to make a short set of remarks here. I appreciate all of you being here. I have learned a lesson: Don't follow Potomac Fever—[*laughter*]—because they sounded pretty good.

We've got community leaders here. We've got grassroots organizers. We've got some incredible young people here who are just doing great work all across the country, folks who are standing up against discrimination and for the rights of parents and children and partners and students——

Audience member. And spouses.

The President. ——and spouses. You're fighting for the idea that everyone ought to be treated equally and everybody deserves to be able to live and love as they see fit.

Now, I don't have to tell the people in this room, we've got a ways to go in the struggle. How many people are still denied their basic rights as Americans, who are still, in particular circumstances, treated as second-class citizens or still fearful when they walk down the street or down the hall at school? Many of you have devoted your lives to the cause of equality. So you all know that we've got more work to do.

But I think it's important for us to note the progress that's been made just in the last 2½ years. I just want everybody to think about this. It was here, in the East Room, at our first pride reception, on the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall riots, a few months after I took office, that I made a pledge, I made a commitment. I said that I would never counsel patience; it wasn't right for me to tell you to be patient any more than it was right for folks to tell African Americans to be patient in terms of their freedoms. I said it might take time to get everything we want done. But I also expected to be judged not by the promises I made, but the promises I kept.

Now, let's just think about it. I met with Judy Shepard. I promised her we'd pass an inclusive hate crimes law named after her son Matthew. And with the help of Ted Kennedy and others, we got it done and I signed the bill.

I met Janice Langbehn, who was barred from the bedside of the woman she loved as she lay dying, and I told her we were going to put a stop to that discrimination. And I issued an order so that any hospital in America that

accepts Medicare or Medicaid—and that means just about every hospital in America—has to treat gay partners just as they have to treat straight partners. Nobody in America should have to produce a legal contract.

I said we'd lift the HIV travel ban. We got that done. We put in place the first national strategy to fight HIV/AIDS.

A lot of people said we weren't going to be able to get "don't ask, don't tell" done, including a bunch of people in this room. [*Laughter*] And I just met Sue Fulton, who was part of the first class of women at West Point, and is an outstanding advocate for gay servicemembers. It took 2 years through Congress, working with Admiral Mullen and Secretary Gates and the Pentagon. We had to hold together a fragile coalition. We had to keep up the pressure. But the bottom line is, we got it done. And in a matter of weeks, not months, I expect to certify the change in policy, and we will end "don't ask, don't tell" once and for all.

I told you I was against the Defense—so-called Defense of Marriage Act. I've long supported efforts to pass a repeal through Congress. And until we reach that day, my administration is no longer defending DOMA in the courts. The law is discriminatory. It violates the Constitution. It's time for us to bring it to an end.

So bottom line is, I've met my commitments to the LGBT community. I have delivered on what I promised. Now, that doesn't mean our work is done. There are going to be times where you're still frustrated with me. [*Laughter*] I know there are going to be times where you're still frustrated at the pace of change. I understand that. I know I can count on you to let me know. [*Laughter*] This is not a shy group. [*Laughter*]

But what I also know is that I will continue to fight alongside you. And I don't just mean as an advocate. You are moms and dads who care about the schools that your children go to. You're students who are trying to figure out how to pay for going to college. You're folks who are looking for good jobs to pay the bills. You're Americans who want this country to prosper. So those are your fights too. And the fact is, these are hard days for America. So we've got a lot of work to do to, not only on ending discrimination. We've got a lot of work to do to live up to the ideals on which we were founded and to preserve the American Dream in our time for everybody, whether they're gay or straight or lesbian or transgender.

But the bottom line is, I am hopeful. I'm hopeful because of the changes we've achieved just in these past 2 years. Think about it. It's astonishing, progress that just a few years ago people would have thought were impossible. And more than that, what gives me hope is the deeper shift that we're seeing that's a transformation not just in our laws, but in the hearts and minds of people, the progress led not by Washington, but by ordinary citizens.

It's propelled not by politics, but by love and friendship and a sense of mutual regard and mutual respect. It's playing out in legislatures like New York. It's playing out in courtrooms. It's playing out in the ballot box, as people argue and debate over how to bring about the changes where we are creating a more perfect Union. But it's also happening around water coolers. It's happening at Thanksgiving tables. It's happening on Facebook and Twitter and at PTA meetings and potluck dinners and church halls and VFW halls.

It happens when a father realizes he doesn't just love his daughter, but also her partner. It happens when a soldier tells his unit that he's gay, and they say, well, yes, we knew that—[*laughter*]—but you know, you're a good soldier. It happens when a video sparks a movement to let every single young person out there know that they're not alone. It happens when people look past their differences to understand our common humanity.

And that's not just the story of the gay rights movement. It is the story of America, and the slow, inexorable march towards a more perfect Union.

I want thank you for your contribution to that story. I'm confident we're going to keep on writing more chapters.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month proclamation of May 31 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at an Armed Forces Farewell Tribute Honoring Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates in Arlington, Virginia
June 30, 2011

Thank you very much. Admiral Mullen, thank you for your eloquent words, but also for your extraordinary service, as you near a well-deserved retirement. And thank you for four decades of incredible service, to you and Deborah.

Members of Congress, Vice President Biden, Deputy Secretary Lynn, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Service Secretaries and distinguished guests, men and women of the finest military in the world, and most of all, Secretary Gates, Becky, Brad, and although she could not be here, I also want to acknowledge your daughter Eleanor.

When I took office, Bob Gates had already served under seven Presidents during an illustrious career that spanned four decades. He would have been forgiven if he had opted for a private life of comfort and ease. He had earned it. And when asked by a reporter whether he might stay on to serve an eighth President, he offered the answer, "Inconceivable." [*Laughter*]

Why did he stay? I know there are days when Bob asks that himself. I'm sure Becky asked that also. But I believe I know the answer, because I've seen this man in those moments of debate and decision when a person's character is revealed: in the Oval Office, in the Situation Room, in the theaters of war.

You see, if you look past all of Bob's flashiness and bravado—[*laughter*]—and his sharp attire, his love for the Washington limelight—[*laughter*]—then what you see is a man that I've come to know and respect, a humble American patriot, a man of common sense and decency, quite simply, one of our Nation's finest public servants.

Bob, today you're not only one of the longest serving Secretaries of Defense in American history, but it is also clear that you've been one of the best.

Why did Bob Gates serve? Our Nation is at war, and to know Bob is to know his profound sense of duty: to country, to our security, and most of all, to our men and women who get up every day and put on America's uniform and put their lives on the line to keep us safe and to keep us free.

When the outcome of the war in Iraq was in doubt, Bob Gates presided over the extraordinary efforts that helped restore order. Over the past 2½ years, we've removed more than 100,000 troops from Iraq, ended our combat mission, and are responsibly ending that war.

When the fight against Al Qaida and our efforts in Afghanistan needed new focus, Bob Gates helped us devise the strategy that has finally put Al Qaida on a path to defeat and ensures that Afghanistan never again becomes a source for attacks against our Nation.

When institutional inertia kept funding systems our troops didn't need, Bob Gates launched a war on waste, challenging conventional wisdom with courage and conviction, speaking hard truths, and saving hundreds of billions of dollars that can be invested in a 21st-century military.

Bob Gates made it his mission to make sure this Department is serving our troops in the field as well as they serve us. And today, we see the lifesaving difference he made in the mine-resistant vehicles and the unmanned aircraft, the shorter medevac times in Afghanistan, in our determination to give our wounded warriors the world-class care they deserve.

Bob, this may be your greatest legacy of all: the lives you saved and the confidence you gave our men and woman in battle, who knew that there was a Secretary of Defense who had their backs and who loved them and who

fought for them and who did everything in his power to bring them home safely.

Let me also thank Becky for her extraordinary support of our extraordinary military families. She's been there day in and day out. And in many ways, I know both Bob and Becky consider our troops to be like their own sons and daughters. And, Bob, your sense of responsibility to them is profound.

It's a responsibility we've shared as leaders who have served every day in a time of war. We're the ones who send them into harm's way. We visit them in the field, knowing that we are the reason they're there. We've stood in solemn respect at Dover when our fallen heroes have made their final journey home. We've held their families in our arms as they grieve the loved ones they gave to America so that our loved ones can be secure. We know the heavy wages of war, and we know America's shared obligations to all who serve.

So today we not only pay tribute to a remarkable public servant, we celebrate the principles for which he served and for which our Nation stands. I believe the life of Bob Gates is a lesson, especially to young Americans, a lesson that public service is an honorable calling, that we can pass our country, better and stronger, to those who follow.

Our next Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, has subscribed to this same life of service, and I'm confident that he too will lead this Department with clear vision and a steady hand.

In his willingness to become the first Secretary of Defense to serve under Presidents of both parties, the integrity of Bob Gates is also a reminder, especially to folks here in Washington, that civility and respectful discourse and citizenship over partisanship are not quaint relics of a bygone era, they are the timeless virtues that we need now more than ever. For whatever differences of party or ideology we may have, we can only keep America strong if we remember what keeps America great: our ability to come together and work together, as Americans, for a common purpose.

Finally, as we face difficult challenges around the world and here at home, let today be a reminder that the United States will meet the tests of our time. We remain at war, but today, fewer Americans are in harm's way, and we will bring the wars we're in to a responsible end. We will make hard fiscal choices, but we'll do so responsibly. And as Commander in Chief, I am determined that our Armed Forces will always, always, remain the best trained, the best led, the best equipped fighting force in history. And in an uncertain world that demands our leadership, the United States of America and our Armed Forces will remain the greatest force for freedom and security that the world has ever known.

This is the America, strong and confident, to which Bob Gates has devoted his life. And this is the America to which we rededicate ourselves.

I can think of no better way to express my appreciation to someone who I have come to admire and whom I consider a friend; I can think of no better way to express the gratitude of the Nation for Bob Gates than with a very special recognition.

Bob, this is not in the program, but I would ask you to please stand.

As President, the highest honor that I can bestow on a civilian is the Presidential Medal of Freedom. It speaks to the values we cherish as a people and the ideals we strive for as a nation. And today it is my great privilege to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to America's 22d Secretary of Defense, Robert M. Gates.

Will the military aide please read the citation?

[*At this point, Lt. Cmdr. John F. McCarthy, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:09 a.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Becky Gates, wife of Secretary Gates, and their son Bradley; and Deborah Mullen, wife of Adm. Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Gates.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
June 30, 2011

The President. Hello, Philly! Thank you. Thank you, Philadelphia! Thank you. It is good to be back in Philly. Good to be back in the great State of Pennsylvania. Congratulations, Phillies fans. That is quite a rotation.

There are a couple of people I want to acknowledge. First of all, you just heard from somebody who I consider just a dear, dear friend. This is a guy who stood with me when nobody was sure whether I was going to win or not. And he didn't have to do it, but he was just a terrific, terrific supporter, a great friend. He is a great Senator. Please give it up for Bob Casey.

Two other outstanding members of your congressional delegation who have been with me and supportive of everything we've been trying to do—I could not be prouder of the work they do on behalf of their constituents—Congressman Brady and Congressman Fattah are here. Thank you.

Your outstanding mayor, Mayor Nutter, is in the house; and one of the great legislators in Congress, who also happens to be a pretty good political mind, and that is why we are so proud to have her as the chairwoman of the DNC, Debbie Wasserman Schultz. Please give her a big round of applause.

Now, I see a lot of new faces out here. And then I see a few faces I've known for a long time. Some of you who are here knew me before I had gray hair. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. You're looking good, though!

The President. Well, thank you. [*Laughter*] Malia and Sasha say that it makes me look distinguished. [*Laughter*] Michelle says it just makes me look old. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Yes, well, she—no, she loves me, but she just says it makes me look old. [*Laughter*]

Now, being here with all of you, I can't help but think back to the election 2½ years ago and that night in Grant Park. It was the culmination of an extraordinary campaign that drew on the hard work and the support of people all across America, men and women—and some children; I did very well with the 8-and-under demographic—[*laughter*]—men and women who believed that change was possible, who believed that we didn't have to accept politics as usual, who believed that we could have a country that once again lived up to its finest ideals and its highest aspirations. And it was a beautiful night. Everybody was feeling pretty good.

But what I said that night—some of you remember this—I said, this is not the end, this is just the beginning, that the road we were on was going to be difficult, that the climb was going to be steep. We didn't know how steep it was going to be. We didn't realize the magnitude of the recession we were facing and the financial crisis. We didn't realize we had already lost 4 million jobs by the time I was sworn in. But we knew it was going to be tough.

And that was okay, because I did not run for President to do easy things. I ran for President to do hard things. I ran for President because it was time to do big things—that we couldn't keep kicking the can down the road anymore, too much was at stake, and that we had to get started tackling the tough issues that families face each and every day. Even if it would take time——

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience*.]

The President. So I—listen——

Audience members. [*Inaudible*]

The President. I—thank you, guys. Now, let me tell you why I thought it was so important to run—even though Michelle, she wasn't so sure—[*laughter*]—and why you guys got involved. I just want everybody to remember: We ran because we believed in an economy that didn't just work for those at the top, but worked for everybody, where prosperity was shared,

from the machinist on the line to the manager on the floor to the CEO in the boardroom.

We ran because we believed our success isn't just determined by stock prices and corporate profits, but by whether ordinary folks can find a good job that pays for a middle class life, where they can pay the mortgage and take care of their kids and send their kids to college and save for retirement and maybe have a little left over to go to a movie and go to dinner once in a while.

We ran because for a decade, wages and incomes had flatlined, and costs kept on going up for everybody even though they didn't have any more income. That was before the economic crisis hit. And obviously, once the economic crisis did hit, we had to take a series of emergency steps to save this economy from collapse, not because we wanted to help banks or make sure that the auto companies' CEOs were making good bonuses, but we did it because we wanted to make sure that families who needed help could still take out a loan to buy a house or start a new business. We wanted to make sure that the millions of people who depended on the auto industry, that they would still have jobs.

And so some of those decisions were tough. And you remember, we got criticized a lot. But you take a look at what's happened. Some folks didn't want to—us getting involved in the auto industry, and I didn't expect to be the CEO of a car company when I ran for President. [*Laughter*] But as a consequence of what we did, we saved jobs. We saved American manufacturing. We cut taxes for middle class families. We ended subsidies to the banks for student loans to make college more affordable. We made sure—that's why I signed a bill to make sure there was equal pay for equal work, because I've got two daughters and I want to make sure they're treated just the same as the boys are. That's why we're promoting manufacturing and homegrown American energy, because that's what will lead to jobs that pay a decent salary. I want the wind turbines and the solar panels and the electric cars to be built right here in America.

That's why, with the help of these outstanding Members of Congress, we're standing up a new consumer bureau with just one responsibility: looking out for ordinary people in the financial system so folks aren't cheated. Whether you're getting a credit card or getting a mortgage, you need to know that you're getting a fair deal.

And that's why we passed health reform, so that nobody in the richest nation on Earth goes bankrupt when they get sick.

We also had a long campaign in 2008 because we believed it was time to end the war in Iraq. And that's what we're doing. We've removed a hundred thousand troops from Iraq. We've ended combat missions. We are on track to remove the rest of the troops, bring them home by the end of this year.

I ran for President because I believed we needed to refocus our efforts and our energy in Afghanistan and going after Al Qaida. And we are going after Al Qaida, and we've taken out their leadership. And because of our progress and the extraordinary sacrifices of our troops, we are fulfilling the commitment I made at the start to reduce our troops, starting this month, so that Afghans can start taking responsibility for their own security and we can start rebuilding right here at home. It's time to start rebuilding here at home, time for nation-building right here.

We live in a world where America is facing stiff competition for good jobs from rapidly growing nations like China and India and Brazil. For a long time, we were told the best way to win that competition is just to undermine consumer protections and undermine clean air laws and clean water laws and hand out tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires. That was the idea that held sway for close to a decade. And let's face it, it didn't work out very well.

In fact, if you look at our history, you'll see that philosophy has never worked out very well, where people are just asking, "What's in it for me?" America was built on the hard work and ingenuity of our people and our businesses. But we also set up a free system of public schools, and a generation was sent to college

on the GI bill. And we constructed roads and highways that spanned a continent. And through investments in research and technology, we sent a man to the Moon and we discovered lifesaving medicine and we launched the Information Age and created the Internet and created millions of jobs along the way. That's how you build a strong nation. That's how you build a strong middle class, by making the investments that are needed and always looking out over the horizon.

So we believe in business, and we believe in free markets. But we also believe in making sure that every kid in this country has a chance. And we believe that our seniors deserve to retire with dignity and respect and have some semblance of security. And we believe in making investments in science and technology. And we believe in having the best infrastructure in the world. And so the same things that worked for us in the past, that's what we need to be doing today.

There's an important debate in Washington right now about how to cut the deficit. And let me say it is absolutely critical that we get a handle on our finances. We've spent a lot of money that we don't have, and we've made a lot of commitments that are going to be hard to keep if we do nothing. And like families all across America, Government has to live within its means.

So I'm prepared to bring our deficit down by trillions of dollars. That's with a "t"—trillions. [*Laughter*] But I will not reduce our deficit by sacrificing our kids' education. I'm not going to reduce our deficit by eliminating medical research being done by our scientists. I won't sacrifice rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our railways and our airports. I want Philadelphia to have the best, not the worst. Not just roads and bridges and sewer mains and water systems; I want us to have the best broadband, the best electric grid.

I'm not going to sacrifice clean energy at a time when our dependence on foreign oil is causing so many Americans pain at the pump. That's sacrificing America's future.

And that's what I want to say to all of you, Philadelphia. There's more than one way to mortgage our future. It would be irresponsible, we would be mortgaging our future, if we don't do anything about the deficit. But we will also be mortgaging our future and it will be irresponsible if, in the process of reducing our deficit, we sacrifice those very things that allow us to grow and create jobs and succeed and compete in the future.

What makes America great is not just the height of our skyscrapers or the might of our military or the size of our GDP. What makes us great is the character of our people. And we are rugged individualists. That's part of what makes us American: We like to make up our own minds, and we don't like other people to tell us what to do.

But what also makes us who we are is our faith in the future and our recognition that our future is shared. It's the belief I am my brother's keeper and my sister's keeper, that my life is richer and our country is stronger when everybody participates and everybody has a measure of security and everybody has got a fair shot at the American Dream. That's our vision for America. Not a vision of a small America, but a vision of a big America and a compassionate America and an optimistic America and a bold America. And that's what we're fighting for.

And the good news is, that America is possible, an America where we're living within our means, but we're still investing in the future. That's possible. Where everybody is making sacrifices, but nobody bears all the burden by themselves. The idea that no matter what we look like or who we are, no matter whether our ancestors came from Ellis Island or on a slave ship or across the Rio Grande, that we are all connected to one another and that we rise and fall together.

That's the idea at the heart of America. That's the idea at the heart of our last campaign. That's the idea at the heart of this campaign. That's why I'm going to need your help more than ever.

This campaign is at its early stages. I've got a day job. I've got other things to do. [*Laughter*] But while I'm working, there are going to be candidates parading around the country.

[*Laughter*] And they're going to do what they do, which is, they're going to attack. Here in Philadelphia, they're going to attack. They won't have a plan—[*laughter*]—but they will attack. And I understand that; that's politics as we've come to know it.

But what I also understand is, is the American people are a lot less interested in us attacking each other; they're more interested in us attacking the country's problems. They're less interested in hearing us exchange insults about the past; they want us to exchange ideas about the future. That's the contest I'm looking forward to, because I know that's the contest that America needs. And by the way, that's the contest that we will win.

And, Philadelphia, I know there are some of you who are frustrated because we haven't gotten everything done that we said we were going to do in 2½ years. It's only been 2½ years. I got 5½ years more to go. And there's—look, there are times where I feel frustrated. But we knew this wasn't going to be easy. We knew a journey like this one, there were going to be setbacks, like there were setbacks during the first campaign. There are going to be times where we stumble, just like we stumbled sometimes during the first campaign.

But we also knew that at each and every juncture in our history when our future was on the line——

[*There was a disruption in the audience.*]

Audience members. Obama! Obama! Obama!

The President. What we also knew was that whenever the country has been at a crossroads, we've always come together to keep the American Dream alive for the next generation. And now is the time for us to do it again. Now is the time to finish what we started and keep the dream alive.

And I just to want to remind everybody here, this campaign is not about me. It's about us. It's about students who are working their way through college, workers heading to factories to build American cars again, small-business owners testing new ideas, construction crews laying down roads, families who faced hardship and setbacks, but who haven't stopped believing in this country, and who believe that we can emerge from this challenge stronger than before.

That's the story of progress in America, the stubborn refusal to accept anything less than the best that this country can be. And with your help, if you're willing to keep fighting with me, if you're willing to knock on doors with me, if you are going to get as much energy going as you got in 2008, then together, we are going to write another chapter in that story and leave a new generation a brighter future.

God bless you, Philadelphia. God bless you, Pennsylvania. Yes, we can. May God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:25 p.m. at the Hyatt at the Bellevue hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Michael A. Nutter of Philadelphia.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Philadelphia
June 30, 2011

Thank you. Everybody, have a seat. I think I'm going to use this instead. Is this working? There you go.

Well, what a spectacular evening, and thank you all for taking the time to be here. I want to first of all, obviously, thank Rhonda and David for not only hosting this incredible event, but also just being such great friends for so many years. Thank you very much, you guys. Really appreciate it.

To those who helped to organize this event, thank you all. To our outstanding DNC chair, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, we love her; to one of the finest mayors in the country, Michael Nutter. And to one of my dearest friends—I always tell this story: When we were campaigning during the primary back in 2008, and it was still pretty rough going, this guy stepped up, endorsed me despite the fact that we were losing here in Pennsylvania, didn't bat

an eye, volunteered to do it and did it happily, and has been a great friend ever since. So we just love him, Bob Casey.

I want to spend most of my time tonight taking questions and having a good conversation, so I'm just going to make a few remarks at the top. Obviously, we've gone through as tough an economic time in this country as we have in my lifetime and in most of our lifetimes. Since the Great Depression, we haven't seen the combination of a financial crisis and then a recession as severe as the one that we experienced in 2008.

And as a consequence, my administration had to make a series of tough decisions. A lot of them weren't popular, but they were the right things to do. And as a consequence of those decisions, we've seen an economy that was shrinking by 6 percent now growing again, and we've created over 2 million private sector jobs over the last 15 months.

But as I think everybody here is aware, things are still tough for folks out there. I get letters, about 10 a night out of the 40,000 communications we get from all across the country, and some of the stories are inspiring, but a lot of them are also heartbreaking, of people losing their homes, people losing their jobs, people trying to figure out if they can save a small business that's been in the family for years, for generations, but suddenly, capital is frozen up; from kids who are worried about their parents losing their home and what it might mean to move.

And it's a reminder that as much progress as we've made, we've got a long, long way to go and that the challenges that America is facing right now weren't a year in the making or 2 years in the making, but are actually 10 years in the making. And what we've seen over the last decade has been a stagnation of income and wages. Some of that was covered up by a housing boom and bubble and everybody using up the credit card. But the truth is, is that the underlying economy is going through all kinds of structural changes because of global competition, because of automation. We are in a more competitive world than ever before.

And part of the reason that I ran for President—the primary reason that I ran for President—was I want to make sure that America makes the tough decisions that allow us to compete effectively in the 21st century and we start reversing the squeeze on the middle class and the decline of our economic fundamentals that have been going on for a very long time.

Now, what does that mean? It means that we're going to have to improve our education system. And I know that Mayor Nutter and others have struggled this—with this for many years. We are making extraordinary progress thanks to as good of a Secretary of Education as I think we've ever seen in Arne Duncan, and we're starting to hold schools accountable, giving them more resources in exchange for more reform. But we've got a long way to go. That's not a project that we can finish in 2, 2½ years.

We've got to revamp our community colleges and make sure that our young people can afford to go to a 4-year college. And we've made progress there by changing the student loan program so that billions of dollars of subsidies that were going to banks are now going to young people to make college more affordable. But making sure that we once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world, the goal that I set 2 years ago, we're on track, but that's going to take a few more years.

We have to have an energy policy in this country. We still don't have one, which is why so many people around the country are so vulnerable to changes in the price of oil. And so what we've done through the Recovery Act and through clean energy programs all across the country is making sure that clean energy jobs are created here in the United States, and we're starting to create a more efficient transportation sector so that we can start weaning ourselves off of dependence on foreign oil.

And a lot of people don't realize that even without legislation last year, we raised fuel efficiency standards on cars for the first time in 30 years, and we're going to do it again. But reversing our energy policy and making it smart in a way that not only saves people's dollars, but also helps save the planet, that's not a 2-year project, that's a multiyear project.

We still have not dealt with immigration in a serious way. And the fact of the matter is, historically, we're a nation of laws and we're a nation of immigrants. And I have consistently said that there's a way of reconciling what, I think, everybody recognizes is a problem of illegal immigration, but doing so in a way that's true to our values so that we're attracting the best and the brightest to stay here and to study here and that young people understand that they're welcome as a part of the American family.

We still have work to do when it comes to infrastructure. We used to have the best roads and the best bridges and the best airports. And we don't anymore. A lot of people here travel, and you go to Beijing airport or Singapore airport, and you look at the trains in Europe or in Japan, and you realize that we've fallen behind and we're not making the investments that we should. And think about all the construction workers who used to be in housing who could be put to work right now doing the work that America needs done, right here in Philadelphia and right here in Pennsylvania and all across the country.

So when it comes to the economy, we've got enormous work to do. And that's a lot of what this debate in Washington is about right now surrounding the deficit. Some of you know that I had a press conference yesterday that attracted a little bit of attention, and I'll probably have to have a few more before we get this issue resolved.

This is not just a numbers debate, this is a values debate. All of us agree that we've got to lower our deficit and lower our debt so that we have a sustainable fiscal path. All of us agree on that. We actually roughly agree on the numbers. We need to bring down the deficit by about $4 trillion over a 10- to 12-year window and start bending the cost curve on health care costs. And the question is, how do we do it? And what I've said is that we can come up with 2 trillion dollars' worth of cuts: cuts to domestic discretionary spending, which includes cuts of some things that I think are worthy and I'd like to do, but we can't afford to do right now; cuts to defense spending, where we have an obligation to make sure that our troops have the best equipment and we continue to have the finest fighting force in the world, but let's face it, the Pentagon has waste too, and we've already identified $400 billion worth of waste. We can identify at least the equivalent to make sure that we're also maintaining economic security here at home.

But we're going to have to also, if we want to achieve this goal, make sure that we do two tough things that frankly neither party wants to do but have to be done. The first is we're going to have to make sure that we continue to focus on how do we reduce Medicare and Medicaid costs, and the second is we're going to have to have more revenue. And what I've said to the Republican Party and what I've said to the Democratic Party in Congress is, there's a way to do this that makes sure that we still maintain our sacred commitment to our seniors so that they have the security that they need in retirement, and there's a way to do it that makes sure that businesses aren't overburdened and that success is still rewarded in our society. We can make changes that are balanced, that involve some shared sacrifice, but assure that we're still making the investments we need to win the future and assure that we're not mortgaging our future because of irresponsible fiscal practices.

And the question is going to be, do we have a politics that's up to the task? This is not a technical problem. A lot of folks have been talking about, well, we need to bring all the parties together and just sort of hammer it out. Well, the truth is, is that you could figure out on the back of an envelope how to get this thing done. The question is one of political will. And one of the reasons I ran in 2008 was because what I saw was a political system that refused to speak hard truths and then act in terms of what was best for our country as opposed to what's best for our politics. And that's needed now more desperately than ever.

So part of the reason I think many of you—as I look around the room, I've got some folks who supported me in 2008 for the same reason that I ran, because you've still got confidence in our politics and you've still got confidence in the future of this country. And I guess the point I'd

like to make—and then we'll just open it up for questions—is I hope that all of you understand that when we started off on this project back in 2007, it wasn't going to be done by 2011. We've still got a lot of work to do, and I'm going to need you as bad as I needed you back then. I have a few more trappings now. My plane is much nicer than when we ran. [*Laughter*] And I understand that sometimes generating the same energy is difficult because we've now gone through 2 years of very difficult work. And my hair is grayer, so I'm not as young and vibrant as I was. [*Laughter*]

But I hope you understand that the stakes are enormously high. And again, as you watch this debt limit and deficit debate unfold, I hope you remember, we can make sure that Medicare is there for future generations and that we are maintaining our commitment to our seniors. And we can make sure that we have a Tax Code that is simpler and fairer and is not inhibiting business and is not inhibiting the free market. We can accomplish those things while still bringing down the deficit, but we've got to do it in a way that is fair and balanced so that we're still investing in things like medical research, we're still investing in our infrastructure, we're still investing in our kids.

That's what I think everybody understands and everybody believes. The only way it's going to happen is if you're engaged in this debate. And if you are, if you stand with me, if you stand with Bob and Debbie and Michael and others who I think are trying to do the right thing, I'm confident we'll be able to look back at this period as, yes, a period of great challenge, but also a period in which America made extraordinary strides to secure its future for the next generation.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at the residence of Rhonda R. and David L. Cohen.

Appendix A—Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this book.

January 1

In the morning, in Kailua, HI, the President had an intelligence briefing.

January 2

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he signed H.R. 847, the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010.

January 3

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia returned to Washington, DC, arriving the following morning.

January 4

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

During the day, the President dropped by a meeting between National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon and Minister of Foreign Affairs Yang Jiechi of China.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Nicolas Sarkozy of France to the White House on January 10.

January 5

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with Reps. Eric Cantor and Nancy Pelosi. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The President announced his intention to nominate Allison A. Hickey to be Under Secretary for Benefits at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jenni R. LeCompte to be Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to nominate Steve L. Muro to be Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Virginia A. Seitz to be Assistant Attorney General in the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lafe E. Solomon to be General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Terence F. Flynn to be a member of the National Labor Relations Board.

January 6

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the Oval Office, they met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner.

January 7

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers. Later, he traveled to Landover, MD, where he toured Thompson Creek Window Company and met with employees.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

January 8

In the afternoon, the President was briefed by Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Adviser John O. Brennan and White House Deputy Chief of Staff James A. Messina on the shootings in Tucson, AZ. Later, he left a telephone message for Mark E. Kelly, husband of shooting victim Rep. Gabrielle D. Giffords, and had separate telephone conversations with Gov. Janice K. Brewer of Arizona, Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner, and Reps. Eric Cantor, Nancy Pelosi, Steny H. Hoyer, James E. Clyburn, and Edward L. Pastor regarding the shootings.

Later in the afternoon, the President was briefed by Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Robert S. Mueller III, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano, Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr., White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley, White House Deputy Chief of Staff James A. Messina, Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs Philip M. Schiliro, National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon, White House Senior Adviser David M. Axelrod, White House Communications Director H. Daniel Pfeiffer, and White House Scheduling and Advance Director Alyssa Mastromonaco on the ongoing investigation of the shootings in Tucson, AZ.

January 9

During the day, the President was briefed several times by Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Adviser John O. Brennan on the ongoing investigation of the shootings in Tucson, AZ.

In the evening, the President was briefed by Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Robert S. Mueller III on the ongoing investigation of the shootings in Tucson, AZ. He also had separate telephone conversations with the families of Christina-Taylor Green and Gabriel M. Zimmerman, victims of the shootings, and Sens. Jon L. Kyl and John S. McCain III.

January 10

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing and was updated by Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Adviser John O. Brennan on the ongoing investigation of the shootings in Tucson, AZ. Then, on the South Lawn, he and Mrs. Obama observed a moment of silence to honor the victims of the shootings. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Old Family Dining Room, the President had a working lunch with President Nicolas Sarkozy of France.

January 11

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing and met with his senior advisers.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Vice President Joe Biden. He also had a telephone conversation with King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia to discuss Saudi Arabia-U.S. relations, the situation in Lebanon, and the King's recovery from medical treatment in the U.S.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Tucson, AZ, on January 12.

January 12

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Prime Minister Sa'ad al-Din al-Hariri of Lebanon to discuss the situation in Lebanon and Lebanon-U.S. relations.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Tucson, AZ. Upon arrival they traveled to the University Medical Center, where they visited with Rep. Gabrielle D. Giffords and four other victims of the January 8 shootings, toured the facilities, and met hospital staff.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to the McKale Center at the University of Arizona, where they met separately with the families of individuals killed in the January 8 shootings, shooting victims discharged from the hospital and their families, Rep. Giffords's staff and their families, and the first-responders and bystanders who rendered aid during the shootings.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama returned to Washington, DC.

January 13

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with his senior advisers.

January 14

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing and met with his senior advisers. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan to discuss Pakistan-U.S. relations, the promotion of regional stability, and ongoing counterterrorism cooperation.

In the afternoon, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with President Mikheil Saakashvili of Georgia to discuss Georgia's economic development, trade, the situation in the Caucasus, and Georgia's participation in military operations in Afghanistan.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Schenectady, NY, on January 21.

January 17

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

January 18

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt to discuss the January 1 terrorist bombings in Alexandria, the situations in Tunisia and Lebanon, and the Middle East peace process. Then, he had an intelligence briefing and met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had an economic briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

In the evening, in the Old Family Dining Room, the President had a working dinner with President Hu Jintao of China.

The President announced his intention to appoint Michael B. Coleman, Horace H. Foxall, Jr., and Bradford J. White as members of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Carole E. Goldberg, Theresa M. Pouley, and Ted Quasula as members of the Indian Law and Order Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Norma Lee Funger as a General Trustee of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

January 19

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with President Hu Jintao of China. Later, in the Cabinet Room, they met with expanded U.S. and China delegations.

In the evening, on the North Portico, the President and Mrs. Obama greeted President Hu upon his arrival for a state dinner and reception. Then, on the Grand Staircase, they participated in a photograph with President Hu.

January 20

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing and met with his senior advisers. Then, he had an economic briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Vice President Joe Biden. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, they met with a bipartisan group of mayors to discuss job creation and the economy.

January 21

In the morning, in the East Room, the President hosted a reception for attendees of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Then, he traveled to Schenectady, NY, where he toured a General Electric plant and met with employees.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

In the evening, the President traveled to Cambridge, MD, where, at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa and Marina, he attended the House Democratic Caucus Issues Conference. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

January 24

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

In the evening, on the State Floor, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a reception for new Members of Congress.

The President announced his intention to nominate David S. Cohen to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald B. Verrilli, Jr., to be U.S. Solicitor General at the Department of Justice.

January 25

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia to express his condolences for the terrorist attack in Moscow on January 24 and discuss counterterrorism cooperation efforts and the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

January 26

In the morning, the President traveled to Green Bay, WI, and then to Manitowoc, WI, where he toured Orion Energy Systems, Inc., and met with employees. Later, he took separate tours of Skana Aluminum Co. and Tower Tech Systems, Inc., a subsidiary of Broadwind Energy, Inc., and met with employees. Then, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Henry F. Floyd to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael C. Green to be a judge on the on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of New York.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ramona Villagomez Manglona to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands.

The President announced his intention to nominate J. Paul Oetken to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

The President announced his intention to nominate Nelva Gonzales Ramos to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas.

The President announced his intention to nominate Natasha Perdew Silas and Linda T. Walker to be judges on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia.

The President announced his intention to appoint Roberta Achtenberg and Marty R. Castro as Commissioners of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Advisory Group on Prevention, Health Promotion, and Integrative and Public Health:

JudyAnn Bigby;
Valerie Brown;
Jonathan E. Fielding;
Ned Helms, Jr.;
Charlotte R. Kerr;
Jeffrey Levi;
Elizabeth Mayer-Davis;
Vivek H. Murthy;
Barbara Otto;
Linda Rosenstock;
John R. Seffrin;
Susan Swider; and
Sharon Von Horn.

The President announced his intention to appoint Linda Randall as a member of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President declared a major disaster in California and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, Tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe winter storms, flooding, and debris and mud flows from December 17, 2010, through January 4, 2011.

January 27

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, they met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Later, in the Situation Room, they met with the President's national security team to discuss the situations in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had lunch. Later, in the Diplomatic Re-

ception Room, he participated in an interview with Steve Grove of YouTube.com.

In the evening, the President was briefed by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon via a memorandum on the situation in Egypt.

January 28

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with the President's national security team to discuss the situation in Egypt. Later, also in the Oval Office, they had an economic briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, the President dropped by a meeting between National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon and National Security Adviser Shiv Shankar Menon of India. Then, he received an additional briefing on the situation in Egypt. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with 2010 SAVE (Securing Americans Value and Efficiency) Award winner Trudy Givens and her family.

Later in the afternoon, he had a telephone conversation with President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt to discuss the situation in Egypt.

January 29

In the afternoon, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon, Deputy National Security Adviser Denis R. McDonough, Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Adviser John O. Brennan, National Security Adviser to the Vice President Antony J. Blinken, Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes, Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Gulf and Southwest Asia Dennis B. Ross, Senior Director for the Middle East and North Africa Daniel B. Shapiro, White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley, Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs, and White House Senior Adviser David A. Plouffe to discuss the situation in Egypt.

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, and King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia to discuss the situation in Egypt.

In the evening, at a private residence, the President attended an event for departing White House Senior Adviser David M. Axelrod.

The White House announced that the President will travel to State College, PA, on February 2.

January 30

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom to discuss the situation in Egypt.

January 31

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in Room 430 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President met with participants of the Women's Online Summit.

The White House announced that the President's trip to State College, PA, was rescheduled to February 3 due to inclement weather.

February 1

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate to discuss the Federal Government's preparations for the severe winter storm impacting numerous States. Later, in the Cabinet Room, he met with members of the Cabinet.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he met with members of the Technology CEO Council to discuss competitiveness, education, innovation, and the need for strategic investments to create jobs and grow the economy.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

In the evening, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and King

Abdullah II of Jordan to discuss the situation in Egypt.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada to the White House on February 4.

The President declared a major disaster in Maine and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, Tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe winter storms and flooding from December 12 through 19, 2010.

February 2

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate to discuss the Federal Government's ongoing response to the severe winter storm impacting numerous States. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he and Vice President Biden had an economic briefing. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President signed the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Sen. John S. McCain III. Then, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Sen. Jesse F. "Jeff" Bingaman, Jr.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with President Ali Abdallah Salih of Yemen to discuss the protests in southern Yemen and the proposed political reforms of the Yemeni Government.

The President announced that he has nominated Paul A. Engelmayer to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

The President announced that he has nominated Arvo Mikkanen to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma.

The President declared a major disaster in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm beginning on January 31 and continuing.

February 3

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Pennsylvania State University in University Park, PA, where he and Secretary of Energy Steven Chu toured laboratories focused on energy-efficient building solutions.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced that he has nominated Jennifer A. Di Toro, Donna M. Murphy, and Yvonne M. Williams to be associate judges on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

The President declared a major disaster in Missouri and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm beginning on January 31 and continuing.

February 4

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden had a working lunch with Senate Minority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the situation in Egypt.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Marquette, MI, on February 10.

The President announced his intention to appoint Susan K. Stern as Chair of the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships:

Leith Anderson;
Andrea Bazan;
Angela Glover Blackwell;
Brian Gallagher;
Mark Hanson;
Lynne Hybels;
Katharine Jefferts Schori;
Julie Schonfeld;
Demetrios Trakatellis;
Marlene Weisenbeck; and
Nancy L. Wilson.

The President declared a major disaster in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm on December 26 and 27, 2010.

February 5

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had separate telephone conversations with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the United Arab Emirates; Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom; and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to discuss the situation in Egypt.

February 6

In the afternoon, in the Blue Room, the President participated in a live television interview with Bill O'Reilly of FOX News for the FOX Super Bowl XLV Pre-Game Show. Later, in the East Room, he and Mrs. Obama hosted a Super Bowl party.

February 7

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President had lunch with former Chair of the President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board Paul A. Volcker. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with Vice President Joe Biden. Later, he called Green Bay Packers Head Coach Mike McCarthy to congratulation him on his team's victory over the Pittsburgh Steelers in Super Bowl XLV.

February 8

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President met with members of the National Policy Alliance. Later, in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates

February 9

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with senior advisers. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Sen. James H. Webb to discuss the Senator's decision not to seek reelection in 2012.

Later in the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia to discuss the situation in Egypt.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President, Vice President Biden, and White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley had a working lunch with Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner and Reps. Eric Cantor and Kevin McCarthy. Later, he dropped by a meeting in the Roosevelt Room between Vice President Biden and Prime Minister Borut Pahor of Slovenia. Then, in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

February 10

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had a briefing on the situation in Egypt with National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon, and continued to receive updates throughout the day. Later, he traveled to Marquette, MI.

In the afternoon, the President visited Doncker's restaurant and fudge shop. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate J. Scott Gration to be Ambassador to Kenya.

The President announced his intention to nominate Marilyn A. Quagliotti to be Deputy Director for Supply Reduction at the Office of Drug Control Policy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Henry J. Aaron to be Chair of the Social Security Advisory Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ana Margarita "Cha" Guzman and Michael E. Guest as members of the National Security Education Board.

February 11

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

February 12

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, King Abdullah II of Jordan, and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the situation in Egypt.

February 14

In the morning, the President traveled to Baltimore, MD, where he visited a science classroom at Parkville Middle School and Center of Technology. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

February 15

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with former President George H.W. Bush.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the Oval Office, they met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

The White House announced that the President will travel to San Francisco, CA, on February 17; Portland, OR, on February 18; and Cleveland, OH, on February 22.

February 16

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Boy Scouts of America participants and executive leadership. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Later, also in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Biden met with Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid and Sens. Richard J. Durbin, Charles E. Schumer, and Patricia L. Murray.

In the evening, in the Family Theater, the President hosted a screening of the film "Thurgood."

The President announced his intention to nominate Michelle Gavin to be Ambassador to Botswana.

The President announced his intention to nominate Thomas M. Harrigan to be Deputy Administrator of Drug Enforcement at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mara Rudman to be Assistant Administrator for the Middle East at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President announced his intention to appoint James Hamilton and Lisa Borin Ogden as members of the Board of Governors of the United Service Organizations, Inc.

The President announced his intention to appoint Bob King as a member of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy Negotiations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Cappy McGarr as a General Trustee of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Al Tarasiuk as Chief Information Officer of the Intelligence Community, Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

The President announced that he has nominated Timothy M. Cain to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina.

The President announced that he has nominated Scott W. Skavdahl to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Wyoming.

February 17

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he met with Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Sens. Thomas R. Harkin, Michael B. Enzi, Jesse F. "Jeff" Bingaman, Jr., and Lamar Alexander to discuss the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch with White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley and Reps. Nancy Pelosi, Steny H. Hoyer, and James E. Clyburn. Later, in the Oval Office, he signed S. 118, designating the John M. Roll U.S. Courthouse in Yuma, AZ, with Sen. John S. McCain III, Pia Carusonone, chief of staff to Rep. Gabrielle D. Giffords, and others in attendance. Later, he traveled to San Francisco, CA, arriving in the evening.

In the evening, at a private residence, the President met with business leaders to discuss his commitment to new investments in research and development, education, and clean energy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Thomas M. Countryman to be Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate William J. Hybl and Anne T. Wedner to be members of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

The President declared a major disaster in Oregon and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm, flooding, mudslides, landslides, and debris flows from January 13 through 21.

February 18

In the morning, the President traveled to Portland, OR, where he toured an Intel Corporation semiconductor manufacturing facility and viewed student demonstrations by Intel Science Talent Search finalists.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon to discuss the situation in Bahrain.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain to discuss the situation in Bahrain.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm and snowstorm on December 26 and 27.

February 22

In the morning, the President was briefed by Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Adviser John O. Brennan on the deaths of four U.S. citizens held hostage by pirates off the coast of Somalia. Later, he traveled to Cleveland, OH.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Mayor-elect Rahm I. Emanuel of Chicago to congratulate him on his election victory.

February 23

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Bethesda, MD, where, at the National Naval Medical Center, he met with wounded U.S. military personnel and their families and presented Purple Hearts to six servicemembers. Later, he returned to Washington, DC. Then, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister John P. Key of New Zealand to express his condolences for the loss of life due to the earthquake in Christchurch, to offer U.S. assistance, and to discuss New Zealand-U.S. relations.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico to discuss the ongoing investigation into the death of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agent Jaime Zapata in Mexico on February 22.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Calderon to the White House on March 3.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Julia E. Gillard of Australia to the White House on March 7.

The President announced his intention to nominate Carl Shapiro to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness:

Stephen M. Case;
Kenneth I. Chenault;
John Doerr;
Roger W. Ferguson, Jr.;
Mark T. Gallogly;
Joseph T. Hansen;
Lewis Hay III;
Gary C. Kelly;
Ellen J. Kullman;
A.G. Lafley;
Monica C. Lozano;
Darlene Miller;
Paul S. Otellini;
Richard D. Parsons;
Antonio Perez;
Penny S. Pritzker;
Brian L. Roberts;
Matthew Rose;
Sheryl K. Sandberg;
Richard L. Trumka;
Laura D. Tyson; and
Robert Wolf.

February 24

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, and Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy to discuss the situation in Libya. Then, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner.

The President announced his intention to appoint Thelma Duggin as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Cancer Advisory Board:

Marcia Cruz-Correa;
Kevin J. Cullen;
Olufunmilayo F. Olopade;
Jonathan M. Samet; and
William Sellers.

February 25

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the situation in Libya. Later, in Room 430 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, he and Vice President Biden met with Democratic Governors.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch.

The President announced that he has named Jeremy Bernard as Special Assistant to the President and Social Secretary.

February 26

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to discuss global economic recovery and the situation in Libya.

February 28

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Susan E. Rice met with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-

moon. Later, also in the Oval Office, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada to discuss the situations in Libya, Egypt, and Tunisia.

The President announced the appointment of N. Gunter Guy, Jr., as State representative of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force.

The President announced his intention to nominate Walter A. Barrows to be a member of the Railroad Retirement Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate David V. Brewer to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

March 1

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner. Later, in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Miami, FL, on March 4.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Boston, MA, on March 8.

March 2

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers. Later, in the Situation Room, he had a video teleconference with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the Oval Office, they met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The President announced that he has nominated Nannette J. Brown to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

The President announced that he has nominated Wilma A. Lewis to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The President announced that he has nominated Nancy Torresen to be a judge for the U.S. District Court for the District of Maine.

The President announced that he has nominated Felicia C. Adams to be U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi.

The President announced that he has nominated Clayton D. Johnson to be U.S. marshal for the Northern District of Oklahoma.

The President announced that he has nominated Alfred C. Lomax to be U.S. marshal for the Western District of Missouri.

The President announced that he has nominated Charles F. Salina to be U.S. marshal for the Western District of New York.

March 3

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, in the Situation Room, they met with the President's national security team to discuss the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Later, in the Oval Office, they met with President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with President Calderon. Later, in the Old Family Dining Room, he had a working lunch with President Calderon.

In the evening, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with crewmembers of the Space Shuttle *Discovery* and the International Space Station. Later, in the Blue Room, he and Mrs. Obama taped a video address on bullying for later broadcast.

The President announced his intention to nominate Daniel L. Glaser to be Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jon D. Leibowitz to be Commissioner and Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert E. Patterson to be Ambassador to Turkmenistan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paul Piquado to be Assistant Secretary for the Import Administration at the Department of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to nominate Eric S. Edelman to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

The President declared a major disaster in Connecticut and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a snowstorm on January 11 and 12.

March 4

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with Mayor-elect Rahm I. Emanuel of Chicago. Then, he met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Miami, FL, where he, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, and former Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida toured Miami Central Senior High School.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

March 7

In the morning, the President and Prime Minister Julia E. Gillard of Australia traveled to Arlington, VA.

In the afternoon, the President and Prime Minister Gillard returned to Washington, DC. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he dropped by a meeting between National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon and President Roza Otunbaeva of Kyrgyzstan. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Obama will host the White House Conference on Bullying Prevention on March 10.

The President declared a major disaster in Massachusetts and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm and snowstorm on January 11 and 12.

March 8

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by an economic briefing. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom to discuss the situation in Libya.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Boston, MA. Later, at TechBoston Academy, he participated in a roundtable discussion on governance with students from area colleges and universities.

In the evening, at the Museum of Fine Arts, the President met with members of the National Basketball Association's Boston Celtics. Later, he retuned to Washington, DC.

March 9

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by an economic briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Veterans of Foreign Wars national commander-in-chief Richard L. Eubank.

During the day, in the Oval Office, the President met with Deputy Associate Director of Public Engagement William Jawando, his wife Michele, and their daughter Alia.

In the evening, in the State Dining Room, the President hosted a viewing party for a game between the National Basketball Association's Chicago Bulls and Charlotte Bobcats.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen of Denmark to the White House on March 14.

The President announced his intention to nominate Dereth B. Glance and Richard M. Moy to be Commissioners of the International Joint Commission at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Daniel B. Shapiro to be Ambassador to Israel.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ben S. Bernanke to be U.S. Alternate Governor of the International Monetary Fund.

The President announced his intention to nominate Christopher B. Howard to be a member of the National Security Education Board.

The President announced that he has nominated Ronald W. Sharpe to be U.S. attorney for the District of the Virgin Islands.

The President announced that he has nominated Robert W. Mathieson to be U.S. marshal for the Eastern District of Virginia.

The President announced that he has nominated Juan Mattos, Jr., to be U.S. marshal for the District of New Jersey.

The President announced that he has nominated Stephen N. Six to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit.

The President announced that he has nominated William F. Kuntz II to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

March 10

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Mrs. Obama met with Sirdeaner L. Walker, Kirk Smalley, other relatives of bullying victims, and antibullying advocates.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President met with Members of Congress to discuss the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ariel Pablos-Mendez to be Assistant Administrator for Global Health at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Dan Arvizu, Alan Leshner, and Bob Granger to be members of the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Frances Ulmer as Chair of the Arctic Research Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Leslie Fields and Roberta Ness as members of the Board of Directors of the Mickey Leland National Urban Air Toxics Research Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Management Advisory Board:

Greg Brown;
Sam Gilliland;
Jeffrey B. Kindler;
Debra L. Lee;
Gail J. McGovern;
Shantanu Narayen;
Enrique Salem;
Elizabeth A. Smith;
Tim Solso; and
Ronald A. Williams.

March 11

In the morning, the President was notified by White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. Later, in the Oval Office, he had a teleconference briefing with Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano, Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate, and senior advisers on the situation in Japan.

Later in the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Enda Kenny of Ireland to congratulate him on assuming office and to discuss Ireland-U.S. relations. Later, in the Oval Office, he had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers.

The President announced his intention to nominate Madelyn R. Creedon to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Alan F. Estevez to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Materiel Readiness.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lewis A. Lukens to be Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paul Wohlers to be Ambassador to Macedonia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rear Adm. Jonathan W. Bailey, NOAA Corps, to be a Commissioner of the Mississippi River Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Maj. Gen. Michael J. Walsh, USA, to be President of the Mississippi River Commission.

March 12

During the day, in the Oval Office, the President was briefed by Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Adviser John O. Brennan on disaster response and relief efforts in Japan.

In the evening, at the Renaissance Washington, DC Downtown Hotel, the President delivered remarks at the annual Gridiron Club dinner.

March 14

In the morning, the President traveled to Arlington, VA, where he and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan toured Kenmore Middle School and viewed student presentations. Later, he returned to Washington, DC. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan. Then, in the Situation Room, he met with the National Security Council to discuss efforts to apprehend Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization.

In the evening, at the St. Regis Hotel, the President attended a Democratic National Committee event.

March 15

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Map Room, he participated in separate television interviews with Royale Da of KOAT in Albuquerque, NM, Jon Delano of KDKA in Pittsburgh, PA, and Regina Mobley of WVEC in Hampton Roads, VA, to discuss education reform.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the East Room, he met with Intel Science Talent Search student finalists. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Vice President Biden traveled to Arlington, VA, where, at Arlington National Cemetery's Memorial Chapel, they paid respects to Frank W. Buckles, who was the last surviving veteran of World War I. Then, they returned to Washington, DC.

Later in the afternoon, in the Map Room, the President participated in an interview with Andy Katz of ESPN to discuss his picks for the NCAA men's basketball tournament. Then, in the Situation Room, he met with his National Security team to discuss the situation in Libya. Later, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. Then, in the Cabinet Room, they met with combatant commanders.

In the evening, in the Blue Room, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a dinner for the combatant commanders and their spouses.

March 16

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Rajiv J. Shah to discuss U.S. humanitarian assistance abroad. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers. Later, also in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

In the evening, in the Treaty Room office of the White House Residence, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Naoto Kan of Japan to discuss ongoing relief efforts in Japan, including the emergency at the Fukushima nuclear power plant.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mary Geiger Lewis to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jane Margaret Triche-Milazzo to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

March 17

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Biden met with Prime Minister Enda Kenny of Ireland.

In the afternoon, the President visited the Japanese Embassy to express his condolences for the loss of life due to the recent earthquake and tsunami.

In the evening, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France to discuss the situation in Libya.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gineen M. Bresso and Myrna Perez to be Commissioners of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard Howorth to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lisa O. Monaco to be Assistant Attorney General for National Security at the Department of Justice.

The President declared a major disaster in Illinois and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm and snowstorm from January 31 through February 3.

March 18

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Situation Room, the President met with a bipartisan group of Congressional leaders to discuss the situation in Libya. Later, in the Map Room, he participated in separate television interviews with Natalie Pasquarella of WSOC in Charlotte, NC, Lynn Martinez of WSVN in Miami, FL, and Jim Gardner of WPVI in Philadelphia, PA, to discuss his upcoming visit to Latin America.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to Brasilia, Brazil.

March 19

In the morning, while en route aboard Air Force One, the President was briefed by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon on the situation in Libya. Upon arrival in Brasilia, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to the Royal Tulip Brasilia Alvorada hotel. Later, at the hotel, he was briefed by National Security Adviser Donilon on the situation in Libya. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the United Arab Emirates, to discuss the situation in Libya.

Later in the morning, at the hotel, the President joined a conference call briefing with his national security team to discuss the situation in Libya. Then, he and Mrs. Obama traveled to the Palacio do Planalto, where they participated in an arrival ceremony with President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Palacio Itamaraty. Later, he traveled to the Brasil 21 Convention Center, where he met with U.S. Embassy personnel and their families. Later, he traveled to the Palacio do Alvorada, where he, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia attended a reception hosted by President Rousseff.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Upon arrival, they traveled to the JW Marriott Hotel Rio de Janeiro.

March 20

In the morning, the President held a conference call briefing with his national security team to discuss the situation in Libya. Then, he, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to Cidade de Deus *favela*, where they attended cultural performances.

Later, they returned to the JW Marriott Hotel Rio de Janeiro.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Theatro Municipal. Later, he returned to the JW Marriott Hotel Rio de Janerio.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to Corcovado mountain, where they toured the Christ the Redeemer statue. Later, they returned to the JW Marriott Hotel Rio de Janeiro.

March 21

In the morning, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to Santiago, Chile. While en route aboard Air Force One, he held a conference call briefing with his national security team to discuss the situation in Libya. Then, he held a conference call briefing with Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Adviser John O. Brennan and other senior officials to discuss the disaster response and relief efforts in Japan.

In the afternoon, while en route aboard Air Force One, the President had a telephone conversation with King Abdullah II of Jordan to discuss the situations in Libya and Bahrain. He was then briefed by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon on the situation in Libya.

Later in the afternoon, upon arrival in Santiago, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to the Palacio de La Moneda, where he and Mrs. Obama participated in an arrival ceremony with President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile and his wife Cecilia Morel de Pinera. Then, also at the Palacio de La Moneda, he met with President Pinera. Later, he traveled to the San Cristobal Tower hotel, where he and Mrs. Obama met with U.S. Embassy staff.

In the evening, at the San Cristobal Tower hotel, the President was briefed by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon on a U.S. military plane that went down in Libya. Later, he and Mrs. Obama returned to the Palacio de La Moneda.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama returned to the San Cristobal Tower hotel. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the situation in Libya. He also had a telephone conversation with Adm. Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, on the U.S. military plane that went down in Libya.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Ireland, the United Kingdom, France, and Poland from May 23 through 28.

March 22

In the morning, at the San Cristobal Tower hotel, the President met with President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile. Then, he, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to San Salvador, El Salvador. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had separate telephone conversations with his national security team, Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, and Amir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar to discuss the situation in Libya.

In the afternoon, upon arrival in San Salvador, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to the Palacio Nacional, where he and Mrs. Obama participated in an arrival ceremony with President Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena of El Salvador and his wife Vanda Pignato. Later, they traveled to the Sheraton Presidente San Salvador Hotel.

In the evening, the President traveled to the Metropolitan Cathedral, where he met with President Funes and Archbishop Jose Luis Escobar Alas of San Salvador, toured the cathedral, and paid his respects at the tomb of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero. Then, he returned to the Sheraton Presidente San Salvador Hotel. Later, he and Mrs. Obama traveled to the Palacio Nacional.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama returned to the Sheraton Presidente San Salvador Hotel.

March 23

In the morning, the President had a conference call briefing with his national security team to discuss the situation in Libya. Then, he traveled to the U.S. Ambassador's residence, where he met with U.S. Embassy staff. Later,

he, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Missouri and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm and snowstorm from January 31 through February 5.

March 24

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon. Then, he had a telephone conversation with President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia to discuss Russia-U.S. relations and the situations in the Middle East and Libya.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had lunch. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner. Then, he and Vice President Biden met with the President's national security team to discuss the situation in Libya.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel to express his condolences for the injuries and loss of life resulting from the terrorist attack in Jerusalem on March 23 and discuss recent rocket attacks and mortar fire into Israel from Gaza.

The President declared a major disaster in New Mexico and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm and extreme cold temperatures from February 1 through 5.

March 25

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers. Then, in the Situation Room, he met with Members of Congress, the National Security Council, and other administration and military officials to discuss the situation in Libya.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President recorded a video message for the people of Cote d'Ivoire.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Georgios Andreas Papandreou of Greece to congratulate him on the 190th anniversary of Greek independence and to discuss the situation in Libya. He also had separate telephone conversations with President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile, and President Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena of El Salvador to thank them for hosting the First Family during their visit to Latin America.

The President declared a major disaster in Oregon and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a tsunami on March 11.

The President declared a major disaster in Washington and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm, flooding, landslides, and mudslides from January 11 through 21.

March 26

The White House announced that the President will address the Nation on the situation in Libya on March 28.

The White House announced that the President will travel to New York City on March 29.

March 28

In the afternoon, in the Situation Room, the President had a videoconference with President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom to discuss the situations in Libya and Egypt. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with members of open government advocacy groups and accepted an award in recognition for making the Federal Government more transparent by providing greater public access to Government information.

March 29

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Situation Room, he met with the National Security Council to discuss efforts to apprehend Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to New York City. Then, at the American Museum of Natural History, he participated in separate television interviews with Brian Williams

of NBC Nightly News, Erica Hill of CBS's "The Early Show," and Diane Sawyer of ABC's "World News With Diane Sawyer" program, all for later broadcast. Then, he toured the museum's Milstein Hall of Ocean Life, where he, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City, and Director of the New York City Science and Engineering Fair Jeanette Kim viewed research projects submitted to the fair by local high school students.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Naoto Kan of Japan to discuss ongoing relief efforts in Japan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Henry S. Ensher to be Ambassador to Algeria.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kenneth J. Fairfax to be Ambassador to Kazakhstan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Deepa Gupta to be a member of the National Council on the Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Nisha Desai Biswal as a member of the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China.

The President announced his intention to appoint Michael C. Camunez as a member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The President announced his intention to appoint Susan H. Hildreth as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center.

The President announced his intention to appoint Gary Hirshberg as a member of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Edwin Schlossberg as a member of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Lesley Weiss as a member of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

March 30

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President had lunch with Vice President Biden. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

During the day, the President met with the leadership of the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss the economic impact of proposed budget cuts. Then, he had a telephone conversation with President Giorgio Napolitano of Italy to congratulate him on the 150th anniversary of Italian unification and discuss Italy's contributions to the no-fly zone over Libya.

March 31

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Shimon Peres of Israel to the White House on April 5.

The President announced that he has nominated George L. Beck, Jr., to be U.S. attorney for the Middle District of Alabama.

The President announced that he has nominated Corinne A. Beckwith to be an appellate judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

The President announced that he has nominated David L. McNulty to be U.S. marshal for the Northern District of New York.

The President announced that he has nominated Alison J. Nathan to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding from February 28 through March 1.

April 1

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Landover, MD, where he toured a UPS shipping facility and viewed clean energy vehicles from the corporate fleets of AT&T, PepsiCo, UPS, and Verizon. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan Princeton N. Lyman.

April 2

During the day, the President had separate phone conversations with Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid to discuss the ongoing negotiations over legislation to continue Federal Government appropriations.

April 4

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with President Ali Ben Bongo Ondimba of Gabon to discuss the situation in Cote d'Ivoire.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to the White House on June 7.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Fairless Hills, PA, on April 6.

April 5

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, in the Situation Room, they had a meeting to discuss the situation in Libya. Later, in the Oval Office, they met with Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner, Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, and Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee Rep. Harold D. Rogers to discuss legislation to continue Federal Government appropriations. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with President Shimon Peres of Israel.

In the afternoon, in the Old Family Dining Room, the President had a working lunch with President Peres. Later, in the Oval Office, he had separate meetings with Millennium Challenge Corporation Chief Executive Officer Daniel W. Yohannes and Overseas Private Investment Corporation Chief Executive Officer Elizabeth L. Littlefield.

The President announced his intention to nominate D. Brent Hardt to be Ambassador to Guyana.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald W. Koran to be Ambassador to Rwanda.

The President announced his intention to nominate Geeta Pasi to be Ambassador to Djibouti.

The President declared a major disaster in Wisconsin and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm and snowstorm from January 31 through February 3.

April 6

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate telephone conversations with Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid to discuss legislation to continue Federal Government appropriations.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA. Upon arrival, he traveled to Fairless Hills, PA. Later, he traveled to New York City.

During the day, the President had a video teleconference with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan to discuss the transition of security operations to Afghan forces and recent violence related to an incident involving the desecration of the Koran.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC. Then, in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid to discuss the ongoing negotiations over legislation to continue Federal Government appropriations.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia to the White House on April 7.

The President announced that he has nominated Sharon L. Gleason to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska.

The President announced that he has nominated Susan O. Hickey to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas.

April 7

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Then, in the Oval Office, they met with Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid to discuss legislation to continue Federal Government appropriations. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner.

In the evening, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden met with Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid to discuss legislation to continue Federal Government appropriations.

The White House announced that the President had canceled his scheduled trip to Indianapolis, IN, on April 8.

The President announced his intention to nominate David S. Johanson to be a member of the U.S. International Trade Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Sean R. Mulvaney to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Export-Import Bank.

The President announced his intention to nominate Cynthia Chavez Lamar, Barbara J. Ells, and Deborah D. Goodman to be members of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Anuj C. Desai as a member of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate Wanda F. Felton to be First Vice President of the U.S. Export-Import Bank.

The President announced his intention to nominate William C. Lineberger to be a member of the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation.

The President announced his intention to nominate James H. Thessin to be Ambassador to Paraguay.

The President declared a major disaster in North Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on April 5 and continuing.

April 8

The President announced his intention to nominate Timothy G. Massad to be Assistant Secretary for Financial Stability at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to appoint Herbert Block and Gary P. Zola as members of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The President announced his intention to appoint Patrik Johansson and Ellen Semonoff as members of the Advisory Group on Prevention, Health Promotion, and Integrative and Public Health at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The President announced his intention to appoint Theresa Arevgaq John to be a member of the National Advisory Council on Indian Education at the Department of Education.

The President declared a major disaster in Hawaii and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a tsunami on March 11.

April 9

In the afternoon, the President met with tourists at the Lincoln Memorial, where he commended Congressional leaders for legislation approved to temporarily continue Federal Government appropriations.

April 10

The White House announced that the President will welcome Amir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar to the White House on April 14.

April 11

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, in the Situation Room, he had a meeting on the situation in Libya.

April 12

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers. Later, he had a telephone conversation with President Alassane Dramane Ouattara of Cote d'Ivoire to congratulate him on assuming duties as a democratically elected President and discuss Cote d'Ivoire-U.S. relations.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Office of Personnel Management Director M. John Berry. Later, in the Situation Room, he met with the National Security Council to discuss efforts to apprehend Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization. Then, in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. Later, also in the Oval Office, they met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

April 13

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Cabinet Room, they met with bipartisan House and Senate leaders to discuss ongoing negotiations to continue Federal Government appropriations.

April 14

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers. Later, he traveled to Chicago, IL.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jonathan D. Farrar to be Ambassador to Nicaragua.

The President announced his intention to nominate Stuart E. Jones to be Ambassador to Jordan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lisa J. Kubiske to be Ambassador to Honduras.

The President announced his intention to nominate Derek J. Mitchell to be U.S. Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma, with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert J. Zimmer to be a member of the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation.

The President announced his intention to nominate William C. Ostendorff to be a Commissioner of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

April 15

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with the leadership of the National Conference of State Legislators.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to Kiev, Ukraine, to attend the Summit on the Safe and Innovative Use of Nuclear Energy and the Chernobyl Pledging Conference to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster on April 19: Zbigniew Brzezinski (head of delegation); John F. Tefft; and Richard L. Morningstar.

April 16

During the day, Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner briefed the President on the Standard & Poor's report on the U.S. debt outlook.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Annandale, VA, on April 19.

The White House announced that the President will travel to San Francisco, CA, on April 20.

April 17

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with Gov. Beverly E. Perdue of North Carolina and Gov. Robert J. Bentley of Alabama to express his condolences for the loss of life resulting from the tornadoes that swept through the region on April 15 and offer Federal assistance for recovery efforts.

April 18

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Map Room, the President participated in separate television interviews with Shaun Boyd of KCNC in Denver, CO, David Crabtree of WRAL in Raleigh, NC, Brad Watson of WFAA in Dallas, TX, and John Stehr of WTHR in Indianapolis, IN, to discuss the national debt and deficit. Later, in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel to wish him well before the start of Passover and discuss ongoing counterterrorism cooperation, the Middle East peace process, recent violence near Gaza, and Israel-U.S. relations. He also had a telephone conversation with Michael Hollowell, manager of a Lowe's home improvement store in Sanford, NC, which was destroyed by a tornado on April 16, to thank him for the swift action he took to save lives.

In the evening, in the Old Family Dining Room, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a Seder to mark the beginning of Passover.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Ricardo Martinelli Berrocal of Panama to the White House on April 28.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Reno, NV, on April 21.

The President declared a major disaster in California and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a tsunami on March 11.

April 19

In the morning, the President traveled to Annandale, VA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

In the afternoon, the President met with the National Security Council to discuss efforts to apprehend Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization. Later, in the State Dining Room, the President met with a bipartisan group of leaders from various fields to discuss immigration reform and border security. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Los Angeles, CA, on April 21.

The President declared a major disaster in North Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on April 16.

April 20

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to San Francisco, CA, arriving in the afternoon.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Palo Alto, CA. Later, he returned to San Francisco.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom to discuss the situation in Libya.

April 21

In the morning, the President traveled to Reno, NV.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Los Angeles, CA. Then, he traveled to Culver City, CA. Later, he returned to Los Angeles.

The President announced his intention to appoint Susan Athey as a member of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint W. Terrell Hodges as a member of the

Board of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert G. Stanton as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

The President announced his intention to appoint E. William Stetson III as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Brady J. Deaton as Chairman of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development.

The President announced his intention to appoint David Blitzstein and Joyce A. Mader as members of the Advisory Committee to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Gebisa Ejeta, Jo Luck, and Marty McVey as members of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development.

April 22

In the morning, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the afternoon.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Crown Prince Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces, to the White House on April 26.

The President declared a major disaster in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and straight-line winds on April 14.

April 24

In the morning, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia attended an Easter service at Shiloh Baptist Church.

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia returned to the White House.

April 25

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, on the South Lawn, the President participated in White House Easter Egg Roll activities. Then, at the White House basketball and tennis courts, he played basketball and tennis with children and visited with them and their parents.

Later in the morning, in the Situation Room, he met with his national security team to discuss the situations in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In the afternoon, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the situations in Libya and Syria. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr.

April 26

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by an economic briefing. Later, in the Map Room, the President participated in separate television interviews with Justin Farmer of WSB in Atlanta, GA, Romona Robinson of WKYC in Cleveland, OH, Barbara Ciara of WTKR in Norfolk, VA, and Stephen Clark of WXYZ in Detroit, MI, to discuss the national debt and deficit.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

During the day, in the Oval Office, the President met with Special Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Senior Director for Resilience Policy Richard A. Reed. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Gov. Michael D. Beebe of Arkansas to discuss tornado damage relief efforts.

April 27

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Chicago, IL. Upon arrival in the afternoon, they participated in the taping of an interview with Oprah Winfrey for the "Oprah Winfrey Show."

In the afternoon, the President traveled to New York City.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Florida on April 29.

The President announced his intention to appoint Judy Gaynor and Richard P. Herman as members of the Commission on Presidential Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert Langer as a member of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint Wendy Wanderman as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Thomas E. Wheeler as a member of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board.

The President declared a major disaster in Alabama and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and straight-line winds beginning on April 27 and continuing.

April 28

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate to discuss the Federal Government's disaster relief and response efforts to severe weather affecting southeastern States.

Later in the morning, in the Situation Room, the President met with his national security team to discuss the situation in Libya. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President and senior administration officials met with influential members of the Hispanic community to discuss immigration reform. Later, in the Situation Room, he met with the National Security Council to discuss efforts to apprehend Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization.

The White House announced that the President's ceremony honoring the 2010 NCAA Football Champion Auburn University Tigers and the "Let's Move!" initiative's South Lawn youth football clinic had been postponed.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Alabama on April 29.

The President declared a major disaster in Alabama and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding beginning on April 15 and continuing.

April 29

In the morning, in the Diplomatic Reception Room, the President met with participants of the 1968 Memphis sanitation strike. Later, he, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to Tuscaloosa, AL. Upon arrival, he and Mrs. Obama toured the damage caused by recent tornadoes.

Also in the morning, the President gave orders to proceed with a U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation to raid the suspected compound of Al Qaida terrorist organization leader Usama bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to Cape Canaveral, FL, where they toured the Orbiter Processing Facility and viewed the Space Shuttle *Atlantis*. Then, the President visited the Launch Control Center and met with crewmembers of the Space Shuttle *Endeavor*. Later, the President and Mrs. Obama met with Rep. Gabrielle D. Giffords, wife of Space Shuttle *Endeavor* commander Mark E. Kelly.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Miami, FL.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area

struck by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding from April 15 through 28.

The President declared a major disaster in Georgia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding on April 27 and 28.

April 30

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had separate telephone conversations with King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain to discuss the situation in Bahrain and President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan to discuss Kazakhstan-U.S. relations.

May 1

In the afternoon, in the Situation Room, the President, Vice President Joe Biden, and the President's national security team were updated on the U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, to apprehend Al Qaida terrorist organization leader Usama bin Laden.

In the evening, the President had separate telephone conversations with former Presidents William J. Clinton and George W. Bush and President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan to discuss the U.S. Navy SEALs counterterrorism operation in Abbottabad that resulted in the death of Usama bin Laden.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and associated flooding from April 25 through 28.

May 2

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers. Later, also in the Oval Office, he had separate telephone conversations with President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico, Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile, President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia, and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France to discuss the death of Al Qaida terrorist organization leader Usama bin Laden.

The President declared a major disaster in Arkansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and associated flooding beginning on April 23 and continuing.

May 3

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Cabinet Room, the President held a Cabinet meeting. Then, in the State Dining Room, he met with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Later, in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada to congratulate him on his electoral victory and discuss the death of Al Qaida terrorist organization leader Usama bin Laden.

The President announced his intention to nominate Anthony F. D'Agostino to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Janice Eberly to be Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy at the Department of the Treasury.

May 4

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he participated in an interview with Steve Kroft of CBS's "60 Minutes" program for later broadcast.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Prince Charles of Wales of the United Kingdom.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel to the White House on May 20.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Fort Campbell, KY, on May 6.

The President announced his intention to nominate Laura A. Cordero to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Barbara K. McQuiston to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition.

The President announced his intention to nominate Matthew H. Tueller to be Ambassador to Kuwait.

The President announced that he has nominated Christopher Droney to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

The President announced that he has nominated Dana L. Christensen to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana.

The President announced that he has nominated John M. Gerrard to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska.

The President announced that he has nominated Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

The President announced that he has nominated Robert N. Scola, Jr., to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

The President announced that he has nominated Katherine B. Forrest and Edgardo Ramos to be judges on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

The President announced that he has nominated Dennis J. Erby to be U.S. marshal for the Northern District of Mississippi.

The President announced that he has nominated Edward M. Spooner to be U.S. marshal for the Northern District of Florida.

The President declared a major disaster in Kentucky and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding beginning on April 22 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on April 26 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on April 27 and continuing.

May 5

In the morning, the President traveled to New York City.

In the afternoon, at Engine Company 54, Ladder Company 4, and Battalion 9 firehouse, the President participated in an interview with Steve Kroft of CBS's "60 Minutes" program for later broadcast. Then, he traveled to the New York Police Department's First Precinct Station. Later, he traveled to the National September 11 Memorial and Museum, where he participated in a wreath-laying ceremony. Then, he traveled to the museum's 9/11 Memorial Preview Site, where he met with the family members of victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Texas on May 10.

The President announced his intention to nominate Stephen A. Higginson to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael H. Corbin to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeffrey DeLaurentis to be Alternate Representative of the U.S. for Special Political Affairs in the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeanine E. Jackson to be Ambassador to Malawi.

The President announced his intention to nominate William H. Moser to be Ambassador to Moldova.

The President declared a major disaster in Iowa and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and straight-line winds on April 9 and 10.

May 6

In the morning, the President traveled to Indianapolis, IN. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Julia E. Gillard of Australia to discuss the death of Al Qaida terrorist organization leader Usama bin Laden. Upon arrival, he traveled Allison Transmission, Inc., where he toured the facilities.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Fort Campbell, KY. Upon arrival, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with the special operations teams who participated in the operation to apprehend Al Qaida terrorist organization leader Usama bin Laden and presented them with the Presidential Unit Citation in recognition of their achievement. Later, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Amir Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah of Kuwait to express his condolences for the death of the Amir's brother, Sheikh Khalid al-Sabah.

The President declared a major disaster in Louisiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on April 25 and continuing.

May 7

The White House announced that the President will travel to El Paso, TX, and Austin, TX, on May 10.

May 9

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India to discuss the death of Al Qaida terrorist organization leader Usama bin Laden and India-U.S. relations. Later, also in the Oval Office, he had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with the crewmembers of Space Shuttle *Discovery*. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano.

In the evening, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with the cochairs of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue.

The White House announced that the President will welcome King Abdullah II of Jordan to the White House on May 17.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, tornadoes, and straight-line winds on April 4.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding beginning on April 19 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Missouri and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding beginning on April 19 and continuing.

May 10

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to El Paso, TX.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to a U.S. Customs and Border Protection cargo inspection facility near the Bridge of the Americas, where, with Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Alan D. Bersin, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection El Paso Field Operations Director Ana Hinojosa, he toured the facility. Then, he traveled to Chamizal National Memorial. Later, he traveled to Austin, TX.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Pres-

idential delegation to Asuncion, Paraguay, to celebrate the bicentennial of the independence of Paraguay on May 14: Aaron S. Williams (head of delegation); Liliana Ayalde; and Arturo A. Valenzuela.

The President announced his intention to appoint James T. Brett as Chair of the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities:

Peter V. Berns;
Clay Boatright;
Micki Edelsohn;
Ann Hardiman;
Alison A. Hillman de Velasquez;
Carl M. La Mell;
Annette McKenzie Anderson;
Carol Quirk;
Susana Ramirez;
Deborah M. Spitalnik;
Lillian Sugarman;
Elizabeth Weintraub;
Carol Wheeler; and
Sheryl White-Scott.

The President declared a major disaster in North Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on February 14 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on March 16 and continuing.

May 11

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with his senior advisers. Then, at the Newseum, he participated in a CBS News town hall meeting on the national economy. Later, in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, he met with the Senate Democratic Caucus. Then, in the Roosevelt Room, he dropped by a meeting of the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities.

The White House announced that the President will welcome North Atlantic Treaty Organization Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to the White House on May 13.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Inauguration of Michel Martelly as President of Haiti on May 14: William J. Clinton (head of delegation); Kenneth H. Merten; and Thomas C. Adams.

The President announced his intention to nominate William J. Burns to be Deputy Secretary of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mark Acton and Robert G. Taub to be Commissioners of the Postal Regulatory Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mark P. Wetjen to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The President announced that he has nominated Richard G. Andrews to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Delaware.

The President announced that he has nominated Cathy Ann Bencivengo to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California.

The President announced that he has nominated Jeffrey J. Helmick to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio.

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on May 3 and continuing.

May 12

In the morning, in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with the Senate Republican Caucus.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the State Dining Room, he met with the Congressional Black Caucus. Then, in the Diplomatic Reception Room, he

participated in an interview with Jose Diaz-Balart of Telemundo. Then, in the Library, he participated in separate interviews with Adriana Arevalo of KINC in Las Vegas, NV, Mario Andres Moreno of WLTV in Miami, FL, and Norma Garcia of KXTX in Dallas, TX.

May 13

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In the afternoon, in the Situation Room, the President delivered remarks to White House staff in honor of the 50th anniversary of the White House Situation Room. He also presided over a ceremony to name a secure conference room after President John F. Kennedy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Terry D. Garcia to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to nominate Dan W. Mozena to be Ambassador to Bangladesh.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frankie A. Reed to be Ambassador to the Fiji Islands, Nauru, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Kiribati.

The President announced his intention to appoint Brad Barber and James F. Karpowitz as members of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Richard Binder and Judith S. Palfrey as members of the Advisory Group on Prevention, Health Promotion, and Integrative and Public Health.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sandy Hoa Dang and Isaac F. Silvera as members of the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Education Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Alan H. Fleischmann as a member of the Commission on Presidential Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint Richard H. Weisberg as a member of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The President declared a major disaster in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm and snowstorm from January 31 through February 5.

The President declared a major disaster in South Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on March 11 and continuing.

May 16

In the morning, the President traveled to Memphis, TN, where, at the Cook Convention Center, he met with State and local officials, volunteers, and families impacted by recent flooding.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

May 17

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had lunch. Later, in the Oval Office, they met with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

May 18

In the morning, the President traveled to New London, CT.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Boston, MA.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate David S. Adams to be Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Luis A. Aguilar and Daniel M. Gallagher, Jr., to be Commissioners of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate the following individuals to be members of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation:

Marcos E. Galindo;
Charles R. Korsmo;

Maria E. Ruess; and
John H. Yopp.

The President announced his intention to nominate John A. Heffern to be Ambassador to Armenia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Harry R. Hoglander to be a member of the National Mediation Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gregory Karawan to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Securities Industry Investor Corporation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Patricia M. Loui to be a member of the Export-Import Bank of the U.S.

The President announced his intention to nominate Susan L. Ziadeh to be Ambassador to Qatar.

The President announced his intention to nominate Constance S. Barker to be a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Morgan Christen to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

May 19

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Diplomatic Room, the President participated in the taping of an interview with Andrew Marr of the BBC's "The Andrew Marr Show" for later broadcast. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Inauguration of Alassane Dramane Ouattara as President of Cote d'Ivoire on May 21: Brooke D. Anderson (head of delegation); and Julia Stanley.

The President announced that he has nominated Andrew L. Carter, Jr., to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

The President announced that he has nominated James R. Gilstrap to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas.

The President announced that he has nominated Gina M. Groh to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia.

May 20

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Old Family Dining Room, the President and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel had a working lunch. Then, he met with 2010 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching award winners.

The President announced his intention to nominate Charles T. Massarone to be a Commissioner of the U.S. Parole Commission at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joyce A. Barr to be Assistant Secretary of State for Administration at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Anne W. Patterson to be Ambassador to Egypt.

The President announced his intention to nominate Claude M. Steele to be a member of the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Dottie Bennett as a member of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The President announced his intention to appoint Catherine A. Bertini as a member of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development.

The President announced his intention to appoint L. Tammy Duckworth and Jodi A. Gillette as members of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center.

The President announced his intention to appoint Debra Langford as a member of the Board of Governors of the United Service Organizations, Inc.

The President announced his intention to appoint Mathew McCollough and Deborah

Ryan as members of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ronald B. Rapoport as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation.

The President declared a major disaster in North Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm from April 29 through May 1.

The President declared a major disaster in Idaho and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, Tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding, landslides, and mudslides from March 31 through April 11.

May 22

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Dublin, Ireland, arriving the following morning. While en route aboard Air Force One, he was briefed on severe storms and tornadoes affecting the Midwest.

May 23

In the morning, upon arrival at Dublin Airport, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Aras an Uachtarain, the residence of President Mary P. McAleese of Ireland, where they signed the guest book in the State Reception Room. Then, they participated in a tree planting ceremony in the residence garden.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Farmleigh, Ireland, where he met with Prime Minister Enda Kenny of Ireland. Then, he returned to Dublin.

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. Jeremiah W. "Jay" Nixon of Missouri to express his condolences for the loss of life and destruction by severe storms and tornadoes affecting the Midwest. Later, he and Mrs. Obama visited with U.S. Embassy staff. Then, he traveled to Moneygall, Ireland, where they toured the President's ancestral home and visited a local pub. Later, they returned to Dublin.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama attended a dinner at the residence of U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Daniel M. Rooney. Later, they traveled to London, England. Upon arrival, they traveled to Winfield House, the residence of U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom Louis B. Susman.

May 24

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. Jeremiah W. "Jay" Nixon of Missouri and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate to discuss tornado damage relief efforts. Later, he and Mrs. Obama met with Charles, Prince of Wales, and his wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, of the United Kingdom.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Buckingham Palace, where they toured palace suites and met with Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, and his wife Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, of the United Kingdom. Then, they participated in an arrival ceremony with Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom. Later, they had lunch with the Queen and her husband Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Following lunch, they toured the palace portrait gallery, where they viewed royal collection pieces related to the United States.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Obama visited Westminster Abbey, where they participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Grave of the Unknown Warrior. Following the ceremony, they toured the Abbey and signed the guest book. Then, they traveled to the Prime Minister's residence at 10 Downing Street, where they participated in a photo opportunity with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom and his wife Samantha G. Cameron.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Prime Minister Cameron visited the Globe Academy, where they toured a classroom and met with students. Then, they played table tennis with students in the school's gym.

In the evening, at Buckingham Palace, the President met with Labour Party Leader and Leader of the Opposition Edward S. Miliband. Later, also at Buckingham Palace, he and Mrs. Obama attended a dinner hosted by Queen Elizabeth II.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ronald D. McCray to be a member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Arnold F. Stancell to be a member of the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kathleen Kerrigan and Albert G. Lauber to be judges on the U.S. Tax Court.

The President announced his intention to appoint Matt Desch, Joseph E. Fergus, and Larissa Herdaas as members of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

May 25

In the morning, the President traveled to the Prime Minister's residence at 10 Downing Street, where he had meetings with Prime Minister David Cameron and Deputy Prime Minister Nicholas Clegg of the United Kingdom. Later, in the garden at 10 Downing Street, he and Prime Minister Cameron attended a barbecue hosted by Mrs. Obama and Mrs. Cameron honoring U.S. and U.K. military servicemembers, military families, and veterans.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Lancaster House. Then, he returned to Buckingham Palace. Later, he traveled to Westminster Palace.

In the evening, the President traveled to the Grosvenor House Hotel, where he attended an event with U.S. Embassy staff. Then, he returned to Buckingham Palace. Later, he and Mrs. Obama traveled to Winfield House, where they hosted a dinner honoring Queen Elizabeth II and her husband Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Then, they returned to Buckingham Palace.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Raleigh-Durham, NC, on June 13.

May 26

In the morning, the President traveled to Deauville, France. Upon arrival at Deauville-Saint-Gatien Airport, he traveled to the Royal Barriere hotel.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Villa La Cercle, where he was greeted by President Nicolas Sarkozy of France. Then, they attended the Group of Eight (G–8) summit working lunch.

Later in the afternoon, at the Centre International de Deauville, the President participated in a G–8 summit working session with G–8 leaders. Then, he met with Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada to discuss border security, economic competitiveness, and progress through the U.S.-Canada Regulatory Cooperation Council. Later, he participated in a G–8 summit working session on the Internet and the economy with Eric E. Schmidt, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Google Inc.; Mark E. Zuckerberg, founder and chief executive officer of Facebook, Inc.; Yuri B. Milner, founder of Digital Sky Technologies; Hiroshi Mikitani, chief executive officer of Rakuten, Inc.; Maurice Levy, chief executive officer of Publicis; and Stephane Richard, chairman and chief executive officer of France Telecom—Orange. Then, he returned to the Royal Barriere hotel.

In the evening, the President attended the G–8 summit working dinner.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Inauguration of Goodluck Jonathan as President of Nigeria on May 29: Johnnie Carson (head of delegation); and Terence P. McCulley.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanics:

Alicia Abella;
Sylvia Acevedo;
Alfredo J. Artiles;
Daniel J. Cardinali;
Francisco G. Cigarroa;
Cesar Conde;
Luis Ricardo Fraga;
JoAnn Gama;
Patricia Gandara;
Maria Neira;
Lisette Nieves;

Darline P. Robles;
Ricardo Romo;
Manny Sanchez; and
Marta Tienda.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee:

Scott Charney;
Dick Costolo;
David G. DeWalt;
Jamie Dos Santos; and
Lisa Hook.

The President announced his intention to appoint John D. Goldman as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

May 27

In the morning, at the Centre International de Deauville, the President participated in a Group of Eight (G–8) summit working session with G–8 leaders. Then, he participated in a G–8 summit working session on Egypt and Tunisia with G–8 leaders, members of the European Union, Prime Minister Essam Abdel Aziz Sharaf of Egypt, Prime Minister Beji Caid Essebsi of Tunisia, Secretary-General Amr Mohammed Moussa of the Arab League of States, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations, International Monetary Fund First Deputy Managing Director John Lipsky, and World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick. Later, he participated in a G–8 summit working session on Africa with G–8 leaders, members of the European Union, and the leaders of the African Union, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations, and the World Bank. Following the meeting, he had a brief discussion with Prime Minister Sharaf of Egypt to discuss democracy efforts in Egypt.

In the afternoon, the President participated in a G–8 summit photograph. Then, he attended the G–8 summit working lunch.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Paris, France. Then, he traveled to Warsaw, Poland, arriving in the evening.

In the evening, the President visited the Tomb of the Unknown Solider and the Monument to the Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, where he participated in separate wreath-laying ceremonies. Then, he traveled to the Presidential Palace, where he and President Bronislaw Komorowski of Poland hosted a dinner for Central and Eastern European leaders. Later, he traveled to the Marriot Warsaw hotel.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Joplin, MO, on May 29.

The President declared a major disaster in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding from April 21 through 28.

May 28

In the morning, at the Marriott Warsaw hotel, the President met with U.S. Embassy staff. Later, at the Presidential Palace, he participated in an arrival ceremony with President Bronislaw Komorowski of Poland.

In the afternoon, at the Chancellery Building, the President participated in an arrival ceremony with Prime Minister Donald Tusk of Poland followed by a working lunch. Later, at the Field Cathedral of the Polish Army, he visited the memorial to the victims of the 2010 Smolensk plane crash. Later, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

May 29

In the morning, the President traveled to Joplin, MO, arriving in the afternoon.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

May 30

In the morning, in the State Dining Room, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a breakfast for Gold Star families. Later, he traveled to Arlington, VA.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

May 31

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with his senior advisers.

June 1

In the morning, in the East Room, the President met with the House Republican Conference. Later, in the Situation Room, he received a briefing on the 2011 hurricane season from Secretary of Homeland Security Janet A. Napolitano, Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator Jane Lubchenco, and National Hurricane Center Director William L. Read.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with his senior advisers. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Toledo, OH, on June 3.

June 2

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with his senior advisers. Later, in the East Room, het met with the House Democratic Caucus.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kathryn H. Ruemmler as White House Counsel.

June 3

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, he traveled to Toledo, OH.

In the afternoon, at Rudy's Hot Dog restaurant, the President had lunch with Mayor Michael P. Bell of Toledo, OH. Then, he toured the facilities of the Chrysler Toledo Assembly Complex. Later, he visited to Fred's Pro Hardware.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

June 4

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria to the White House on June 8.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Ali Ben Bongo Ondimba of Gabon to the White House on June 9.

June 5

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a reception for the Ford's Theatre.

June 6

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, in the Situation Room, they met with the President's national security team to discuss the situations in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In the afternoon, in the Secretary of War Suite of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President participated in separate television interviews with Kate Amara of Hearst Television news bureau in Washington, DC, Leon Bibb of WEWS in Cleveland, OH, and Devin Scillian of WDIV in Detroit, MI, about the automobile industry. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

During the day, in the Roosevelt Room, the President dropped by a meeting of young adults chosen from participants in the White House's 100 Youth Roundtables Initiative.

In the evening, at 1789 Restaurant, the President had dinner with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Alexandria, VA, on June 8.

The President declared a major disaster in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding from May 22 through 25.

June 7

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany. Later, in the Cabinet Room, he held an expanded meeting with Chancellor Merkel.

In the evening, on the North Portico, the President and Mrs. Obama greeted Chancellor Merkel and her husband Joachim Sauer upon their arrival for a state dinner and reception. Then, on the Grand Staircase, they participated in a photo opportunity with Chancellor Merkel and Mr. Sauer.

During the day, in the Roosevelt Room, the President dropped by a meeting between National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon and Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain to discuss Bahrain-U.S. relations and the situation in Bahrain.

The President announced his intention to nominate Azizah al-Hibri to be a member of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The President announced his intention to nominate Nancy Brooks Gilbert, Deborah E. Lipstadt, and Marc R. Stanley to be members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mark Gorenberg to be a member of the President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michelle J. Howard to be a member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Naval Academy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Isaac N. "Ike" Skelton IV to be a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Tamara Toussaint to be a member of the Commission on Presidential Scholars.

The President announced his intention to nominate Peter Schaumber to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation.

The President announced that he has nominated Margo K. Brodie to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

The President announced that he has nominated Jesse M. Furman to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

The President announced that he has nominated Susie Morgan to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

The President announced that he has nominated Mary E. Phillips to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri.

The President declared a major disaster in Illinois and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms from April 19 through May 2 and flooding resulting from those storms beginning April 19 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on May 21 and 22.

June 8

In the morning, in the Situation Room, the President had a video teleconference with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan to discuss the impact of the death of Al Qaida terrorist organization leader Usama bin Laden on counterterrorism efforts and the transition of security operations to Afghan forces.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria, VA, where he toured the college's Automotive Training Program facility.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with senior advisers. Later, in the Private Dining Room, he and Vice President Joe Biden had lunch.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria to discuss Nigeria-U.S. relations and the situations in Sudan, Libya, and Cote d'Ivoire.

During the day, in Room 430 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President dropped by a meeting of writers from various personal finance and financial news web sites.

The President announced his intention to nominate Arnold A. Chacon to be Ambassador to Guatemala.

The President announced his intention to nominate Christopher Merrill to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities.

The President announced his intention to nominate Earl A. Wayne to be Ambassador to Mexico.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rebecca R. Wodder to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife at the Department of the Interior.

The President announced his intention to appoint Giselle Fernandez as a member of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

June 9

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with President Ali Ben Bongo Ondimba of Gabon to discuss Gabon-U.S. relations and the situations in Sudan, Libya, and Cote d'Ivoire.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. Janice K. Brewer of Arizona to discuss the wildfires in Arizona.

The White House announced that the President will visit Durham, NC, on June 13.

June 10

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Camp David, MD.

The White House announced that the President will visit Miami, FL, on June 13.

The White House announced that the President will visit San Juan, Puerto Rico, on June 14.

The President announced his intention to nominate Martin J. Gruenberg to be Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kenneth J. Kopocis to be Assistant Administrator for the Office of Water at the Environment Protection Agency.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, tornadoes, and straight-line winds from April 26 through May 8.

The President declared a major disaster in Alaska and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by an ice jam and flooding from May 8 through 13.

June 12

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

June 13

In the morning, the President traveled to Durham, NC, where he toured a Cree, Inc., manufacturing facility. Later, also at Cree, Inc., he participated in an interview with Ann Curry of NBC's "Today" program.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Miami Beach, FL.

In the evening, the President traveled to Miami, FL.

June 14

In the morning, the President traveled to San Juan, Puerto Rico. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to congratulate him on his party's victory in parliamentary elections and discuss Turkey-U.S. relations.

In the afternoon, the President visited La Fortaleza, the Governor's mansion, where he took a tour and attended a youth orchestra concert. Later, at Kasalta restaurant, he had lunch with Commonwealth Sen. Alejandro Garcia Padilla of Puerto Rico.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to the Caribe Hilton hotel, where he participated in separate interviews with El Nuevo Dia and Univision of Puerto Rico. Then, also at the Caribe Hilton, he attended a Democratic National Committee fundraiser. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

June 15

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met

with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. Later, also in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Biden had an economic briefing.

In the evening, in the Oval Office, the President met with his senior advisers.

The President declared a major disaster in Vermont and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding from April 23 through May 9.

The President declared a major disaster in Massachusetts and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on June 1.

June 16

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with President Tsakhia Elbegdorj of Mongolia to discuss Mongolia-U.S. relations.

During the day, in the Library, the President participated in an interview with Robin Roberts of ABC's "Good Morning America" program. He also met with U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan Princeton N. Lyman to discuss the situation in Sudan.

June 17

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had lunch. Then, he traveled to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where he met with wounded U.S. military personnel and their families and presented Purple Hearts to two servicemembers.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to the White House, where, in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner. Then, in the Grand Foyer, he attended a reception for members of the Young Elected Officials Network from across the country.

During the day, the President called Richard P. Carlisle, head coach of the National Basketball Association's Dallas Mavericks, to congratulate him and his team on winning the NBA Finals.

The President declared a major disaster in Montana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms on April 3, 8, 22, 26, and 30, on May 9 and 10, 18–21, and 30, and flooding resulting from those storms on April 4 and continuing.

June 18

In the morning, the President, traveled to Joint Base Andrews, MD, where he played a round of golf with Vice President Joe Biden, Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner, and Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio. Later, at the facility's clubhouse, they visited with U.S. military personnel.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Nebraska and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on June 17 and continuing.

June 20

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the Middle East and the situations in Libya and Syria.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Then, in the Roosevelt Room, he and Vice President Biden met with Mayors David Bing of Detroit, MI; Mick Cornett of Oklahoma City, OK; John H. "Buddy" Dyer of Orlando, FL; Anthony R. Foxx of Charlotte, NC; Sylvester "Sly" James, Jr., of Kansas City, MO; Kevin M. Johnson of Sacramento, CA; Elizabeth Kautz of Burnsville, MN; Michael A. Nutter of Philadelphia, PA; Jean Quan of Oakland, CA; Kasim Reed of Atlanta, GA; Joseph P. Riley, Jr., of Charleston, SC; Raymond T. Rybak, Jr., of Minneapolis, MN; Scott Smith of Mesa, AZ; and Antonio R. Villaraigosa of Los Angeles,

CA, to discuss the national economy and job creation efforts.

During the day, in the Oval Office, the President met with Lois Curtis, one of the original plaintiffs in the *Olmstead* case, in which the U.S. Supreme Court reaffirmed the rights of Americans with disabilities to live independently.

June 21

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with his senior advisers.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with President-elect Ollanta Moises Humala Tasso of Peru to congratulate him on his June 5 election victory and discuss Peru-U.S. relations. Then, also in the Oval Office, he had separate meetings with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner and Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

The White House announced that the President will travel to New York City on June 23.

The President announced his intention to nominate Brian T. Baenig to be Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations at the Department of Agriculture.

The President announced his intention to nominate Margaret Bartley and Gloria Wilson Shelton to be judges on the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mary Beth Leonard to be Ambassador to Mali.

The President announced his intention to appoint Christopher Che as a member of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness.

The President announced his intention to appoint Linda K. Kerber as a member of the Permanent Committee for the Oliver Wendell Holmes Devise.

The President announced his intention to appoint Trina Thompson as a member of the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

June 22

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan, President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan, Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, and Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to discuss the progress in Afghanistan.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with National Endowment for Democracy 2011 Democracy Award recipients Jamel Bettaieb and Zahraa Said. Later, in the Grand Foyer, he attended a reception celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece:

Jill T. Biden (head of delegation);
Bart W. Conner;
Kareem Dale;
Micki Edelsohn;
Kenneth Melvin;
Daniel B. Smith; and
Ann Stock.

June 23

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with House of Representatives Democratic leadership.

In the afternoon, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Serzh Sargsian of Armenia and President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan to discuss the upcoming summit on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Then, he traveled to Fort Drum, NY. Later, in the Rapid Deployment Facility, he met with Gold Star families.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to New York City, arriving in the evening.

In the evening, the President traveled to Pittsburgh, PA.

The President announced that he has nominated Jennifer G. Zipps and Rosemary Marquez to be judges on the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona.

The President announced that he has nominated Steven R. Frank to be U.S. marshal for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

The President announced that he has nominated Martin J. Pane to be U.S. marshal for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

The President announced that he has nominated David B. Webb to be U.S. marshal for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

The President declared a major disaster in Indiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding beginning on April 19 and continuing.

June 24

In the morning, the President traveled to Carnegie Mellon University, where he toured the National Robotics Engineering Center.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Iowa on June 28.

The President announced his intention to nominate Sung Y. Kim to be Ambassador to South Korea.

The President announced his intention to nominate Adrienne S. O'Neal to be Ambassador to Cape Verde.

The President announced his intention to nominate S. Roy Woodall, Jr., to be a member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint Hyman Bass as a member of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint Patty Gerstenblith as Chairman of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint Nancy C. Wilkie as a member of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sean C. Martin, Russell F. Smith III, and Marija Vojkovich as Commissioners on the Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

The President announced his intention to appoint Patrick J. Murphy as a member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Military Academy.

June 26

The President declared an emergency in Kansas on June 25 and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on June 1 and continuing.

June 27

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Joe Biden met with Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. Jack Dalrymple of North Dakota to discuss the impact of recent flooding and recovery efforts.

In the evening, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden met with Senate Minority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Philadelphia, PA, on June 30.

The President declared a major disaster in Iowa and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on May 25 and continuing.

June 28

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Later, he traveled to Moline, IL. Upon arrival, he traveled to Bettendorf, IA.

In the afternoon, the President visited Ross' Restaurant. Then, he traveled to Riverdale, IA, where he toured the facilities of Alcoa Davenport Works. Later, he traveled to Moline, IL. Then, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to Germany to attend the

Women's World Cup game on July 2: Nancy-Ann DeParle (head of delegation); Philip D. Murphy; and Kristine Lilly Heavey.

The President announced his intention to nominate Deborah A.P. Hersman to be Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Thomas C. Krajeski to be Ambassador to Bahrain.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert A. Mandell to be Ambassador to Luxembourg.

The President announced his intention to appoint Hal Simpson as U.S. Representative to the Rio Grande Compact Commission.

The President announced that he has nominated J. Malcolm Bales to be U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Texas.

The President announced that he has nominated Kenneth Magidson to be U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Texas.

The President announced that he has nominated Robert L. Pitman to be U.S. attorney for the Western District of Texas.

The President announced that he has nominated Sarah R. Saldana to be U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Texas.

June 29

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden met with Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid and Sens. Richard J. Durbin, Charles E. Schumer, and Patricia L. Murray to discuss the deficit reduction and debt limit negotiations. Later, also in the Oval Office, he and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a farewell dinner for outgoing Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

The President announced that he has nominated Gregory K. Davis to be U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Mississippi.

The President announced that he has nominated David O. Nuffer to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah.

The President announced that he has nominated Thomas O. Rice to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington.

June 30

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with senior advisers.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, he traveled to Philadelphia, PA, where he visited John's Water Ice.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared an emergency in Missouri and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning on June 1 and continuing.

Appendix B—Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted January 5

Arenda L. Wright Allen,
of Virginia, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, vice Jerome B. Friedman, retired.

Anthony J. Battaglia,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of California, vice M. James Lorenz, retired.

Cathy Bissoon,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania, vice Thomas M. Hardiman, elevated.

James Emanuel Boasberg,
of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Columbia, vice Thomas F. Hogan, retired.

Vincent L. Briccetti,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Kimba M. Wood, retired.

Louis B. Butler, Jr.,
of Wisconsin, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Wisconsin, vice John C. Shabaz, retired.

Susan L. Carney,
of Connecticut, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, vice Barrington D. Parker, retired.

Claire C. Cecchi,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of New Jersey, vice Joseph A. Greenaway, elevated.

Edward Milton Chen,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of California, vice Martin J. Jenkins, resigned.

Max Oliver Cogburn, Jr.,
of North Carolina, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of North Carolina, vice Lacy H. Thornburg, retired.

Mae A. D'Agostino,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of New York, vice Frederick J. Scullin, Jr., retired.

Roy Bale Dalton, Jr.,
of Florida, to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida, vice Henry Lee Adams, Jr., retired.

Sara Lynn Darrow,
of Illinois, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of Illinois, vice Joe B. McDade, retired.

Edward J. Davila,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of California, vice Marilyn Hall Patel, retired.

Charles Bernard Day,
of Maryland, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Maryland, vice Peter J. Messitte, retired.

Bernice Bouie Donald,
of Tennessee, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit, vice Ronald Lee Gilman, retired.

Edward Carroll DuMont,
of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit, vice Paul R. Michel, retired.

James E. Graves, Jr.,
of Mississippi, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, vice Rhesa H. Barksdale, retired.

Caitlin Joan Halligan,
of New York, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit, vice John G. Roberts, Jr., elevated.

Marco A. Hernandez,
of Oregon, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Oregon, vice Garr M. King, retired.

Paul Kinloch Holmes, III,
of Arkansas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas, vice Robert T. Dawson, retired.

Mark Raymond Hornak,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania, vice Donetta W. Ambrose, retired.

Amy Berman Jackson,
of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Columbia, vice Gladys Kessler, retired.

Richard Brooke Jackson,
of Colorado, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Colorado, vice Phillip S. Figa, deceased.

Steve C. Jones,
of Georgia, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, vice Orinda D. Evans, retired.

John A. Kronstadt,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California, vice Florence-Marie Cooper, deceased.

Goodwin Liu,
of California, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice a new position created by Public Law 110–177, approved January 7, 2008.

Robert David Mariani,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, vice James M. Munley, retired.

Marina Garcia Marmolejo,
of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Texas, vice Samuel B. Kent, resigned.

John J. McConnell, Jr.,
of Rhode Island, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Rhode Island, vice Ernest C. Torres, retired.

Sue E. Myerscough,
of Illinois, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of Illinois, vice Jeanne E. Scott, resigned.

Victoria Frances Nourse,
of Wisconsin, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit, vice Terence T. Evans, retired.

Jimmie V. Reyna,
of Maryland, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit, vice Haldane Robert Mayer, retired.

John Andrew Ross,
of Missouri, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri, vice Charles A. Shaw, retired.

Esther Salas,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of New Jersey, vice Katharine Sweeney Hayden, retired.

Diana Saldana,
of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Texas, vice George P. Kazen, retired.

James E. Shadid,
of Illinois, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of Illinois, vice Michael M. Mihm, retired.

Kevin Hunter Sharp,
of Tennessee, to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Tennessee, vice Robert L. Echols, retired.

Michael H. Simon,
of Oregon, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Oregon, vice Ancer L. Haggerty, retired.

Amy Totenberg,
of Georgia, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, vice Jack T. Camp, Jr., retired.

Michael Francis Urbanski,
of Virginia, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Virginia, vice Norman K. Moon, retired.

Kathleen M. Williams,
of Florida, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida, vice Daniel T.K. Hurley, retired.

Daniel M. Ashe,
of Maryland, to be Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, vice Samuel D. Hamilton.

Thomas M. Beck,
of Virginia, to be a member of the National Mediation Board for a term expiring July 1, 2013, vice Elizabeth Dougherty, term expired.

Ann D. Begeman,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring December 31, 2015, vice Charles D. Nottingham, term expired.

Albert J. Beveridge III,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2016, vice James Davison Hunter, term expired.

Sue Kathrine Brown,
of Texas, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Montenegro.

Constance M. Carroll,
of California, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2016, vice Tamar Jacoby, term expired.

James Michael Cole,
of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Attorney General, vice David W. Ogden, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Elisebeth Collins Cook,
of Illinois, to be a member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for a term expiring January 29, 2014 (new position).

Nils Maarten Parin Daulaire,
of Virginia, to be Representative of the United States on the Executive Board of the World Health Organization, vice Joxel Garcia.

Cathy N. Davidson,
of North Carolina, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2016, vice Marvin Bailey Scott, term expired.

James Xavier Dempsey,
of California, to be a member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for a term expiring January 29, 2016 (new position).

Peter A. Diamond,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of 14 years from February 1, 2000, vice Frederic S. Mishkin.

Kelvin K. Droegemeier,
of Oklahoma, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2016 (reappointment).

Paula Barker Duffy,
of Illinois, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2016, vice Harvey Klehr, term expired.

Aaron Paul Dworkin,
of Michigan, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2014, vice Karen Lias Wolff, term expired.

Timothy J. Feighery,
of New York, to be Chairman of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States for a term expiring September 30, 2012, vice Mauricio J. Tamargo, term expired.

Maurice B. Foley,
of Maryland, to be a Judge of the U.S. Tax Court for a term of 15 years (reappointment).

Frances M.D. Gulland,
of California, to be a member of the Marine Mammal Commission for a term expiring May 13, 2012, vice Vera Alexander, term expired.

Janice Lehrer-Stein,
of California, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2013, vice Victoria Ray Carlson, term expired.

Carolyn N. Lerner,
of Maryland, to be Special Counsel, Office of Special Counsel, for the term of 5 years, vice Scott J. Bloch, resigned.

Terry Lewis,
of Michigan, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2011, vice C. William Swank, term expired.

Terry Lewis,
of Michigan, to be member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2014 (reappointment).

Peter Bruce Lyons,
of New Mexico, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Nuclear Energy), vice Warren F. Miller, Jr., resigned.

Cora B. Marrett,
of Wisconsin, to be Deputy Director of the National Science Foundation, vice Kathie L. Olsen.

Denise Ellen O'Donnell,
of New York, to be Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, vice Domingo S. Herraiz, resigned.

Stephanie O'Sullivan,
of Virginia, to be Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence, vice David C. Gompert, resigned.

Eric G. Postel,
of Wisconsin, to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, vice Jacqueline Ellen Schafer, resigned.

Leon Rodriguez,
of Maryland, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, vice Paul DeCamp.

Jo Ann Rooney,
of Massachusetts, to be Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, vice Michael L. Dominguez.

David Bruce Shear,
of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Daniel L. Shields III,
of Pennsylvania, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Brunei Darussalam.

Pamela L. Spratlen,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kyrgyz Republic.

Kathryn D. Sullivan,
of Ohio, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce, vice Phillip A. Singerman.

Clyde E. Terry,
of New Hampshire, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2013, vice John R. Vaughn, resigned.

Kurt Walter Tong,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Senior Official for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum.

James A. Torrey,
of Connecticut, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2013, vice Dianne I. Moss, term expired.

Joseph M. Torsella,
of Pennsylvania, to be Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform, with the rank of Ambassador.

Joseph M. Torsella,
of Pennsylvania, to be Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform.

Andrew L. Traver,
of Illinois, to be Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (new position).

Michael Vickers,
of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, vice James R. Clapper, Jr.

Martha Wagner Weinberg,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2016, vice Herman Belz, term expired.

Terence Francis Flynn,
of Maryland, to be a member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of 5 years expiring August 27, 2015, vice Peter Schaumber, term expired.

Allison A. Hickey,
of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Benefits of the Department of Veterans Affairs, vice Patrick W. Dunne, resigned.

Jenni Rane LeCompte,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, vice Michele A. Davis, resigned.

Steve L. Muro,
of California, to be Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Memorial Affairs, vice William F. Tuerk, resigned.

Virginia A. Seitz,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Jack Landman Goldsmith III, resigned.

Lafe E. Solomon,
of Maryland, to be General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board, vice Ronald E. Meisburg, resigned.

Submitted January 26

Judith A. Ansley,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for the remainder of the term expiring September 19, 2011, vice Ron Silver.

Craig Becker,
of Illinois, to be a member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of 5 years expiring December 16, 2014, vice Dennis P. Walsh.

Alan D. Bersin,
of California, to be Commissioner of Customs, Department of Homeland Security, vice W. Ralph Basham.

Donald M. Berwick,
of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, vice Mark B. McClellan.

William J. Boarman,
of Maryland, to be Public Printer, vice Robert Charles Tapella, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from December 22, 2010, to January 5, 2011.

Rafael Borras,
of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, vice Elaine C. Duke, resigned.

Matthew J. Bryza,
of Illinois, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Azerbaijan, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from December 22, 2010, to January 5, 2011.

David Lee Carden,
of New York, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

Richard Christman,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for the remainder of the term expiring October 6, 2012, vice Tom Osborne, resigned.

Mario Cordero,
of California, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for the term expiring June 30, 2014, vice Harold J. Creel, Jr., resigned.

Philip E. Coyle III,
of California, to be an Associate Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, vice Rosina M. Bierbaum.

Scott C. Doney,
of Massachusetts, to be Chief Scientist of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, vice Kathryn D. Sullivan.

Rebecca F. Dye,
of North Carolina, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for the term expiring June 30, 2015 (reappointment).

Norman L. Eisen,
of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Czech Republic, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from December 22, 2010, to January 5, 2011.

Robert Stephen Ford,
of Vermont, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Syrian Arab Republic, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from December 22, 2010, to January 5, 2011.

Katherine M. Gehl,
of Wisconsin, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2013, vice Collister Johnson, Jr., term expired.

Agnes Gund,
of New York, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2016 (new position).

Jane D. Hartley,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2014, vice Donna N. Williams, resigned.

Jonathan Andrew Hatfield,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Corporation for National and Community Service, vice Gerald Walpin.

Roberto R. Herencia,
of Illinois, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2012, vice Patrick J. Durkin, term expired.

Eric L. Hirschhorn,
of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration, vice Mario Mancuso, resigned.

Matthew Maxwell Taylor Kennedy,
of California, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2012, vice Samuel E. Ebbesen, term expired.

Marguerite W. Kondracke,
of Tennessee, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring June 10, 2014, vice Richard Allan Hill, term expired.

George Albert Krol,
of New Jersey, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Uzbekistan.

John A. Lancaster,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term of 4 years (reappointment).

Matthew Francis McCabe,
of Pennsylvania, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2013, vice Leona White Hat, term expired.

Michael F. Mundaca,
of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, vice Eric Solomon, resigned.

John D. Podesta,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2014, vice Alan D. Solomont, resigned.

Michael W. Punke,
of Montana, to be a Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador, vice Peter F. Allgeier, resigned.

Lisa M. Quiroz,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring February 8, 2014, vice Vince J. Juaristi, term expired.

Francis Joseph Ricciardone, Jr.,
of Massachusetts, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Turkey, to which position he was appointed during the recess of the Senate from December 22, 2010, to January 5, 2011.

Winslow Lorenzo Sargeant,
of Wisconsin, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, Small Business Administration, vice Thomas M. Sullivan.

Timothy Charles Scheve,
of Pennsylvania, to be a member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board for a term expiring September 14, 2015, vice Nancy Killefer, term expired.

Phyllis Nichamoff Segal,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2013, vice Jacob Joseph Lew, term expired.

Islam A. Siddiqui,
of Virginia, to be Chief Agricultural Negotiator, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador, vice Richard T. Crowder.

Richard Sorian,
of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, vice Christina H. Pearson, resigned.

Paul M. Tiao,
of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Department of Labor, vice Gordon S. Heddell, resigned.

Juan F. Vasquez,
of Texas, to be a Judge of the U.S. Tax Court for a term of 15 years (reappointment).

Henry F. Floyd,
of South Carolina, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit, vice Karen J. Williams, retired.

Michael Charles Green,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of New York, vice David G. Larimer, retired.

Ramona Villagomez Manglona,
of the Northern Mariana Islands, to be Judge for the District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands for a term of 10 years, vice Alex R. Munson, retired.

J. Paul Oetken,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Denny Chin, elevated.

Nelva Gonzales Ramos,
of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Texas, vice Hayden Wilson Head, Jr., retired.

Natasha Perdew Silas,
of Georgia, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, vice Clarence Cooper, retired.

Linda T. Walker,
of Georgia, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, vice Beverly B. Martin, elevated.

Katharine G. Abraham,
of Iowa, to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, vice Christina Duckworth Romer, resigned.

David S. Cohen,
of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, vice Stuart Levey, resigning.

Heather A. Higginbottom,
of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, vice Robert L. Nabors, resigned.

Donald B. Verrilli, Jr.,
of the District of Columbia, to be Solicitor General of the U.S., vice Elena Kagan, resigned.

Submitted February 2

Paul A. Engelmayer,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Gerard E. Lynch, elevated.

Arvo Mikkanen,
of Oklahoma, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Oklahoma, vice Terry C. Kern, retired.

Submitted February 3

Jennifer A. Di Toro,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Judith E. Retchin, retired.

Donna Mary Murphy,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Kaye K. Christian, retired.

Yvonne M. Williams,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Brook Hedge, retired.

February 7, 2011

Suzan D. Johnson Cook,
of New York, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, vice John V. Hanford III, resigned.

Submitted February 14

Henry J. Aaron,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Social Security Advisory Board for a term expiring September 30, 2014, vice Jeffrey Robert Brown, term expired.

Jonathan Scott Gration,
of New Jersey, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Kenya.

Michael E. Guest,
of South Carolina, to be a member of the National Security Education Board for a term of 4 years, vice James William Carr, term expired.

Ana Margarita Guzman,
of Texas, to be a member of the National Security Education Board for a term of 4 years, vice George M. Dennison, term expired.

Maj. Gen. Marilyn A. Quagliotti, USAF (Ret.),
of Virginia to be Deputy Director for Supply Reduction, Office of National Drug Control Policy, vice James F.X. O'Gara.

Submitted February 16

Timothy M. Cain,
of South Carolina, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of South Carolina, vice P. Michael Duffy, retired.

Scott Wesley Skavdahl,
of Wyoming, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Wyoming, vice William F. Downes, retiring.

Submitted February 17

Mari Carmen Aponte,
of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of El Salvador.

Thomas M. Countryman,
of Washington, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (International Security and Non-Proliferation), vice John C. Rood.

Michelle D. Gavin,
of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Botswana.

Thomas M. Harrigan,
of New York, to be Deputy Administrator of Drug Enforcement, vice Michele M. Leonhart.

Mara E. Rudman,
of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, vice Sean R. Mulvaney.

Ryan C. Crocker,
of Washington, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2012, vice Penne Percy Korth, term expired.

Sim Farar,
of California, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2012, vice John E. Osborn, term expired.

William J. Hybl,
of Colorado, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2012 (reappointment).

Anne Terman Wedner,
of Illinois, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2013, vice Jay T. Snyder, term expired.

Submitted February 28

Carl Shapiro,
of California, to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, vice Cecilia Elena Rouse.

Submitted March 2

Felicia C. Adams,
of Mississippi, to be U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi for the term of 4 years, vice James Ming Greenlee, term expired.

Walter A. Barrows,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Railroad Retirement Board for a term expiring August 28, 2014, vice Virgil M. Speakman, Jr., resigned.

David V. Brewer,
of Oregon, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2013, vice Florence K. Murray, term expired.

Nannette Jolivette Brown,
of Louisiana, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana, vice Stanwood R. Duval, Jr., retired.

Clayton D. Johnson,
of Oklahoma, to be U.S. Marshal for the Northern District of Oklahoma for the term of 4 years, vice Timothy Dewayne Welch, term expired.

Wilma Antoinette Lewis,
of the District of Columbia, to be Judge for the District Court of the Virgin Islands for a term of 10 years, vice Raymond L. Finch, retired.

Alfred Cooper Lomax,
of Missouri, to be U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Missouri for the term of 4 years, vice Charles M. Sheer, term expired.

S. Amanda Marshall,
of Oregon, to be U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon for the term of 4 years, vice Karin J. Immergut, term expired.

Charles F. Salina,
of New York, to be U.S. Marshal for the Western District of New York for the term of 4 years, vice Peter A. Lawrence, term expired.

Nancy Torresen,
of Maine, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Maine, vice D. Brock Hornby, retired.

Thomas Gray Walker,
of North Carolina, to be U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina for the term of 4 years, vice George E.B. Holding.

Submitted March 4

Eric S. Edelman,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term of 4 years, vice Chester A. Crocker, term expired.

Daniel L. Glaser,
of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing, Department of the Treasury, vice David S. Cohen.

Jon D. Leibowitz,
of Maryland, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for a term of 7 years from September 26, 2010 (reappointment).

Robert Patterson,
of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Turkmenistan.

Paul Piquado,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce, vice David M. Spooner, resigned.

Submitted March 9

William Francis Kuntz II,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, vice Nina Gershon, retired.

Robert William Matheison,
of Virginia, to be U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of Virginia for the term of 4 years, vice John Roberts Hackman.

Juan Mattos, Jr.,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. Marshal for the District of New Jersey for the term of 4 years, vice James Thomas Plousis, term expired.

Ronald W. Sharpe,
of the Virgin Islands, to be U.S. Attorney for the District of the Virgin Islands the term of 4 years, vice Anthony Jerome Jenkins, resigned.

Steve Six,
of Kansas, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, vice Deanell Reece Tacha, retired.

Submitted March 10

Ben S. Bernanke,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. Alternate Governor of the International Monetary Fund for a term of 5 years (reappointment).

Dereth Britt Glance,
of New York, to be a Commissioner on the part of the U.S. on the International Joint Commission, U.S. and Canada, vice Irene B. Brooks.

Christopher B. Howard,
of Virginia, to be a member of the National Security Education Board for a term of 4 years, vice Kiron Kanina Skinner, term expired.

Richard M. Moy,
of Montana, to be a Commissioner on the part of the U.S. on the International Joint Commission, U.S. and Canada, vice Samuel W. Speck.

Daniel Benjamin Shapiro,
of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Israel.

Submitted March 14

Dan Arvizu,
of Colorado, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2016 (reappointment).

Rear Admiral Jonathan W. Bailey,
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to be a member of the Mississippi River Commission.

Madelyn R. Creedon,
of Indiana, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice Michael Nacht.

Alan F. Estevez,
of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Materiel Readiness (new position).

Robert C. Granger,
of New Jersey, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Board for Education Sciences for a term expiring November 28, 2014, vice James R. Davis, resigned.

Alan I. Leshner,
of Maryland, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2016 (reappointment).

Lewis Alan Lukens,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Senegal, and to serve concurrently and

without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Ariel Pablos-Mendez,
of New York, to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, vice Kent R. Hill, resigned.

Maj. Gen. Michael J. Walsh,
U.S. Army, to be a member and President of the Mississippi River Commission.

Paul D. Wohlers,
of Washington, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Macedonia.

Submitted March 16

Mary Geiger Lewis,
of South Carolina, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of South Carolina, vice Henry F. Floyd.

Jane Margaret Triche-Milazzo,
of Louisiana, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana, vice Mary Ann Vial Lemmon, retired.

Submitted March 17

Gineen Maria Bresso,
of Florida, to be a member of the Election Assistance Commission for a term expiring December 12, 2013 (reappointment).

Anthony Bryk,
of California, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Board for Education Sciences for a term expiring November 28, 2015 (reappointment).

Richard C. Howorth,
of Mississippi, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2015, vice Howard A. Thrailkill, term expired.

Lisa O. Monaco,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice David S. Kris, resigned.

Myrna Perez,
of Texas, to be a member of the Election Assistance Commission for the remainder of the term expiring December 12, 2011, vice Rosemary E. Rodriguez.

Myrna Perez,
of Texas, to be a member of the Election Assistance Commission for a term expiring December 12, 2015 (reappointment).

Submitted March 30

Henry S. Ensher,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Kenneth J. Fairfax,
of Kentucky, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Deepa Gupta,
of Illinois, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2016 (new position).

Submitted March 31

George Lamar Beck, Jr.,
of Alabama, to be U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Alabama for the term of 4 years, vice Leura Garrett Canary, term expired.

Corinne Ann Beckwith,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of 15 years, vice Inez Smith Reid, retired.

Gary Locke,
of Washington, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

David L. McNulty,
of New York, to be U.S. Marshal for the Northern District of New York for the term of 4 years, vice James Joseph Parmley, term expired.

Alison J. Nathan,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Sidney H. Stein, retired.

Submitted April 6

Alan F. Estevez,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense (new position).

Sharon L. Gleason,
of Alaska, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Alaska, vice John W. Sedwick, retired.

D. Brent Hardt,
of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

Susan Owens Hickey,
of Arkansas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas, vice Harry F. Barnes, retired.

Donald W. Koran,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Rwanda.

Geeta Pasi,
of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Djibouti.

Withdrawn April 6

Alan F. Estevez,
of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Materiel Readiness (new position), which was sent to the Senate on March 14, 2011.

Submitted April 8

Anuj Chang Desai,
of Wisconsin, to be a member of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the U.S. for the term expiring September 30, 2011, vice Stephen C. King, term expired.

Anuj Chang Desai,
of Wisconsin, to be a member of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the U.S. for the term expiring September 30, 2014 (reappointment).

Barbara Jeanne Ells,
of Colorado, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development for a term expiring October 18, 2016, vice Lisa Genevieve Nason, term expired.

Wanda Felton,
of New York, to be First Vice President of the Export-Import Bank of the U.S. for a term expiring January 20, 2013, vice Linda Mysliwy Conlin, term expired.

Deborah Downing Goodman,
of Oklahoma, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development for a term expiring October 18, 2014, vice Jeanne Givens, term expired.

David S. Johanson,
of Texas, to be a member of the U.S. International Trade Commission for a term expiring December 16, 2018, vice Charlotte A. Lane, term expired.

Cynthia Chavez Lamar,
of New Mexico, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development for a term expiring May 19, 2016 (reappointment).

William Carl Lineberger,
of Colorado, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2016, vice Kathryn D. Sullivan, term expired.

Timothy G. Massad,
of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, vice Herbert M. Allison, Jr., resigned.

Sean Robert Mulvaney,
of Illinois, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the U.S. for a term expiring January 20, 2015, vice Bijan Rafiekian, term expired.

James Harold Thessin,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Executive Service, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Paraguay.

Withdrawn April 8

Jonathan Andrew Hatfield,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Corporation for National and Community Service, vice Gerald Walpin, which was sent to the Senate on January 26, 2011.

Submitted April 14

Jonathan Don Farrar,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Nicaragua.

Stuart E. Jones,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Lisa J. Kubiske,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Honduras.

Derek J. Mitchell,
of Connecticut, to be Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma, with the rank of Ambassador (new position).

William Charles Ostendorff,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of 5 years expiring June 30, 2016 (reappointment).

Robert J. Zimmer,
of Illinois, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2016, vice Jon C. Strauss, term expired.

Submitted May 4

Dana L. Christensen,
of Montana, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Montana, vice Donald W. Molloy, retiring.

Christopher Droney,
of Connecticut, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, vice Guido Calabresi, retired.

Dennis J. Erby,
of Mississippi, to be U.S. Marshal for the Northern District of Mississippi for the term of 4 years, vice Larry Wade Wagster, resigned.

Katherine B. Forrest,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Jed S. Rakoff, retired.

John M. Gerrard,
of Nebraska, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Nebraska, vice Richard G. Kopf, retiring.

Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of California, vice Vaughn R. Walker, retired.

Edgardo Ramos,
of Connecticut, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Stephen C. Robinson, resigned.

Robert N. Scola, Jr.,
of Florida, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida, vice Paul C. Huck, retired.

Edward M. Spooner,
of Florida, to be U.S. Marshal for the Northern District of Florida for the term of 4 years, vice Dennis Arthur Williamson, term expired.

Ryan C. Crocker,
of Washington, personal rank of Career Ambassador, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Anthony Frank D'Agostino,
of Maryland, to be a Director of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation for a term expiring December 31, 2011, vice Mark S. Shelton, term expired.

Anthony Frank D'Agostino,
of Maryland, to be a Director of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation for a term expiring December 31, 2014 (reappointment).

Janice Eberly,
of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, vice Alan B. Krueger, resigned.

Thomas Hicks,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Election Assistance Commission for a term expiring December 12, 2013, vice Gracia M. Hillman, term expired (originally nominated on April 12, 2010).

Withdrawn May 4

Ryan C. Crocker,
of Washington, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2012, vice Penne Percy Korth, term expired, which was sent to the Senate on February 17, 2011.

Submitted May 9

Michael H. Corbin,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Arab Emirates.

Laura A. Cordero,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation for a term expiring December 15, 2015, vice Juanita Alicia Vasquez-Gardner, term expired.

Jeffrey DeLaurentis,
of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Alternate Representative of the United States of America for Special Political Affairs in the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

Jeffrey DeLaurentis,
of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, during his tenure of service as Alternate Representative of the United States of America for Special Political Affairs in the United Nations.

Stephen A. Higginson,
of Louisiana, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, vice Jacques L. Wiener, Jr., retired.

Jeanine E. Jackson,
of Wyoming, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Malawi.

Barbara K. McQuiston,
of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense (new position).

William H. Moser,
of North Carolina, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Moldova.

Matthew H. Tueller,
of Utah, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the State of Kuwait.

Withdrawn May 9

Paul M. Tiao,
of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Department of Labor, vice Gordon S. Heddell, resigned, which was sent to the Senate on January 26, 2011.

Submitted May 11

Richard G. Andrews,
of Delaware, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Delaware, vice Joseph J. Farnan, Jr., retired.

Cathy Ann Bencivengo,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of California, vice Jeffrey T. Miller, retired.

Jeffrey J. Helmick,
of Ohio, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio, vice James G. Carr, retired.

William J. Burns,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the personal rank of Career Ambassador, to be Deputy Secretary of State, vice James Braidy Steinberg.

Submitted May 12

Mark D. Acton,
of Kentucky, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission for a term expiring October 14, 2016 (reappointment).

Robert G. Taub,
of New York, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission for a term expiring October 14, 2016, vice Tony Hammond, term expired.

Mark P. Wetjen,
of Nevada, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for a term expiring June 19, 2016, vice Michael V. Dunn, term expiring.

Submitted May 16

Terry D. Garcia,
of Florida, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce, vice Dennis F. Hightower, resigned.

Dan W. Mozena,
of Iowa, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Frankie Annette Reed,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Fiji Islands, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of

the United States of America to the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu, and the Republic of Kiribati.

Submitted May 18

Morgan Christen,
of Alaska, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice Andrew J. Kleinfeld, retired.

Submitted May 19

David S. Adams,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Legislative Affairs), vice Richard Rahul Verma, resigned.

Luis A. Aguilar,
of Georgia, to be a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for a term expiring June 5, 2015 (reappointment).

Constance Smith Barker,
of Alabama, to be a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2016 (reappointment).

Andrew L. Carter, Jr.,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Victor Marrero, retired.

Marcos Edward Galindo,
of Idaho, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring April 17, 2014, vice Edward Alton Parrish, term expired.

Daniel M. Gallagher, Jr.,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for a term expiring June 5, 2016, vice Kathleen L. Casey, term expiring.

James Rodney Gilstrap,
of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas, vice Thad Heartfield, retired.

Gina Marie Groh,
of West Virginia, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of West Virginia, vice W. Craig Broadwater, deceased.

John A. Heffern,
of Missouri, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Armenia.

Harry R. Hoglander,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the National Mediation Board for a term expiring July 1, 2014 (reappointment).

Gregory Karawan,
of Virginia, to be a Director of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation for a term expiring December 31, 2013, vice William Herbert Heyman, term expired.

Charles R. Korsmo,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring October 13, 2011, vice Michael Prescott Goldwater, term expired.

Charles R. Korsmo,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring October 13, 2017 (reappointment).

Patricia M. Loui,
of Hawaii, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the U.S. for a term expiring January 20, 2015, vice Diane G. Farrell, term expired.

Maria E. Rengifo-Ruess,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring February 4, 2014, vice Julia L. Wu, term expired.

John H. Yopp,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring October 13, 2011, vice Raquel Egusquiza, term expired.

John H. Yopp,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring October 13, 2017 (reappointment).

Susan Laila Ziadeh,
of Washington, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the State of Qatar.

Submitted May 23

Joyce A. Barr,
of Washington, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Administration), vice Rajkumar Chellaraj, resigned.

Charles Thomas Massarone,
of Kentucky, to be a Commissioner of the U.S. Parole Commission for a term of 6 years, vice Edward F. Reilly, Jr., resigned.

Anne W. Patterson,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, personal rank of Career Ambassador, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Claude M. Steele,
of New York, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2014, vice Elizabeth Hoffman, term expired.

Submitted May 26

Kathleen Kerrigan,
of Massachusetts, to be a Judge of the U.S. Tax Court for the term of 15 years, vice Harry A. Haines, term expired.

Albert G. Lauber,
of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the U.S. Tax Court for the term of 15 years, vice Stephen J. Swift, resigned.

Ronald David McCray,
of Texas, to be a member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring September 25, 2012, vice Andrew Saul, resigned.

Ronald David McCray,
of Texas, to be a member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring September 25, 2016 (reappointment).

Leon E. Panetta,
of California, to be Secretary of Defense, vice Robert M. Gates.

David H. Petraeus,
of New Hampshire, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, vice Leon E. Panetta.

Arnold F. Stancell,
of Connecticut, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2014, vice Barry C. Barish, term expired.

Submitted June 7

Margo Kitsy Brodie,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, vice Allyne R. Ross, retired.

Jesse M. Furman,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Alvin K. Hellerstein, retired.

Susie Morgan,
of Louisiana, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana, vice G. Thomas Porteous, Jr.

Mary Elizabeth Phillips,
of Missouri, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Missouri, vice Ortrie D. Smith, retired.

Submitted June 9

Arnold A. Chacon,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Guatemala.

Christopher Merrill,
of Iowa, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2016, vice Iris Love, term expired.

Earl Anthony Wayne,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, personal rank of Career Ambassador, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Mexico.

Rebecca R. Wodder,
of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, vice Thomas L. Strickland, resigned.

Withdrawn June 9

Peter A. Diamond,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of 14 years from February 1, 2000, vice Frederic S. Mishkin, which was sent to the Senate on January 5, 2011.

Submitted June 13

Martin J. Gruenberg,
of Maryland, to be Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for a term of 5 years, vice Sheila C. Bair, resigned.

Martin J. Gruenberg,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for a term expiring December 27, 2018 (reappointment).

Kenneth J. Kopocis,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, vice Peter Silva Silva, resigned.

Submitted June 16

John Edgar Bryson,
of California, to be Secretary of Commerce, vice Gary Locke.

Submitted June 22

Brian T. Baenig,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, vice Krysta Harden.

Margaret Bartley,
of Maryland, to be a Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims for the term of 15 years, vice a new position created by Public Law 110–389, approved October 10, 2008.

Mary Beth Leonard,
of Massachusetts, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Mali.

Gloria Wilson Shelton,
of Maryland, to be a Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims for the term of 15 years, vice a new position created by Public Law 110–389, approved October 10, 2008.

Submitted June 23

Steven R. Frank,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Pennsylvania for the term

of 4 years, vice Thomas M. Fitzgerald, term expired.

Jennifer Guerin Zipps,
of Arizona, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona, vice John M. Roll, deceased.

Rosemary Marquez,
of Arizona, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona, vice Frank R. Zapata, retired.

Martin J. Pane,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. Marshal for the Middle District of Pennsylvania for the term of 4 years, vice Michael Robert Regan, term expired.

David Blake Webb,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania for the term of 4 years, vice Gary Edward Shovlin, resigned.

Submitted June 27

Sung Y. Kim,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Korea.

Adrienne S. O'Neal,
of Michigan, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cape Verde.

S. Roy Woodall, Jr.,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council for a term of 6 years (new position).

Submitted June 28

John Malcolm Bales,
of Texas, to be U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas for the term of 4 years, vice Rebecca A. Gregory, resigned.

Kenneth Magidson,
of Texas, to be U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Texas for the term of 4 years, vice Donald J. DeGabrielle, Jr., resigned.

Robert Lee Pitman,
of Texas, to be U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas for the term of 4 years, vice Johnny Keane Sutton, term expired.

Sarah Ruth Saldana,
of Texas, to be U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas for the term of 4 years, vice Richard B. Roper III, resigned.

Submitted June 29

Gregory K. Davis,
of Mississippi, to be U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Mississippi for the term of 4 years, vice Dunn Lampton, resigned.

David Nuffer,
of Utah, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Utah, vice Dale A. Kimball, retired.

Thomas Owen Rice,
of Washington, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington, vice Robert H. Whaley, retired.

Submitted June 30

Deborah A.P. Hersman,
of Virginia, to be Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term of 2 years (reappointment).

Thomas Charles Krajeski,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Robert A. Mandell,
of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Luxembourg.

Appendix C—Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released January 2

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 847

Released January 4

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 81, H.R. 628, H.R. 1107, H.R. 1746, H.R. 2142, H.R. 2751, H.R. 4445, H.R. 4602, H.R. 4748, H.R. 4973, H.R. 5116, H.R. 5133, H.R. 5470, H.R. 5605, H.R. 5606, H.R. 5655, H.R. 5809, H.R. 5877, H.R. 5901, H.R. 6392, H.R. 6400, H.R. 6412, H.R. 6510, H.R. 6533, S. 118, S. 841, S. 1481, S. 3036, S. 3243, S. 3447, S. 3481, S. 3592, S. 3874, S. 3903, and S. 4036

Released January 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Text: Op-ed by Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius for the Chicago Tribune: Don't Turn Back the Clock on Health Care

Released January 6

Text: Statement by Office of Management and Budget Director Jacob J. "Jack" Lew on repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and a Congressional Budget Office letter assessing the budgetary effects of repealing the act

Released January 7

Text: Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chair Austan D. Goolsbee on the employment situation in December

Text: Statement by Assistant to the President for Special Projects Stephanie Cutter: Repealing the Affordable Care Act will Hurt the Economy

Released January 9

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Call for Moment of Silence for Victims of Shooting in Tucson, Arizona

Released January 10

Statement by the Press Secretary: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction Submits Resignation

Released January 11

Statement by the Press Secretary on President Obama's meeting with Prime Minister Sa'ad al-Din al'Hariri of Lebanon

Released January 12

Advance text of the President's remarks at a memorial service for the victims of the shooting in Tucson, AZ

Released January 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs (dated January 12)

Transcript of a press gaggle by Sen. Kirsten E. Gillibrand and Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Released January 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs, Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner, and National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon on the state visit of President Hu Jintao of China

Statement by the Press Secretary: President and First Lady, Vice President and Dr. Biden, Cabinet Secretaries, Senior Administration Officials To Honor Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

Statement by the Press Secretary: Reaching Out to the Cuban People

Released January 17

Statement by the Press Secretary: President and First Lady, Vice President and Dr. Biden, Cabinet Secretaries, Senior Administration Officials To Honor Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service

Released January 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Fact sheet: The President's Regulatory Strategy

Released January 19

Statement by the Press Secretary: U.S. & China: Building a Positive, Cooperative, and Comprehensive Relationship

Text: U.S.-China Joint Statement

Fact sheet: U.S.-China Commercial Relations

Fact sheet: U.S.-China Economic Issues

Fact sheet: U.S., China Partner To Counter Nuclear Smuggling

Fact sheet: U.S.-China Cooperation on Climate Change, Clean Energy, and the Environment

Fact sheet: U.S.-China Science and Technology Cooperation Highlights: 32 Years of Collaboration

Fact sheet: U.S., China Sign Agreement To Establish Center of Excellence on Nuclear Security

Released January 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Released January 21

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Released January 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Statement by the Press Secretary: Presidential Initiative Supports Military Families

Text: Strengthening Our Military Families

Text: Guest List for the First Lady's Box at the State of the Union Address

Released January 25

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama, Vice President Biden, Members of the Cabinet Fan Out Across the Country, Highlight Vision for Winning the Future

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Egypt

Fact sheet: The State of the Union: President Obama's Plan To Win the Future

Excerpts of the President's State of the Union Address

Advance text of the President's State of the Union Address

Released January 26

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Text: Statement by National Security Council Spokesman Michael A. Hammer on the inauguration of the Afghan Parliament

Advance text of the President's remarks at Orion Energy Systems, Inc., in Manitowoc, WI

Released January 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Released January 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Text: Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chair Austan D. Goolsbee on the advance estimate of GDP for the fourth quarter of 2010

Released January 31

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House To Launch "Startup America" Initiative

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 366

Text: Statement by National Security Council Spokesman Thomas F. Vietor on events surrounding "Strategy 31" protests in Russia

Fact sheet: White House Launches "Startup America" Initiative

Released February 1

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Launches 2011 Race to the Top Commencement Challenge

Released February 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Egypt

Released February 3

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Released February 4

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Eugene B. Sperling, Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Austan D. Goolsbee, and Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Releases New Report on American Innovation

Statement by the Press Secretary on the detainment and charging of U.S. Government contractor Alan Gross by Cuban authorities

Text: Joint Statement by President Obama and Prime Minister Harper of Canada on Regulatory Cooperation

Text: Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Austan D. Goolsbee on the employment situation in January

Fact sheet: Strategy for American Innovation: Securing Our Economic Growth

Released February 6

Text: Op-ed by the President for USA Today: Reagan Saw That "We Are All Patriots"

Released February 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Advance text of the President's remarks to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Released February 8

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Released February 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Details Plan To Win the Future Through Expanded Wireless Access (embargoed until February 10)

Fact sheet: President Obama's Plan To Win the Future Through the Wireless Innovation and Infrastructure Initiative (embargoed until February 10)

Released February 10

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Advance text of the President's remarks at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, MI

Released February 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs

Text: Statement by National Economic Council Director Eugene B. Sperling on the Trade Adjustment Assistance program

Released February 12

Text: Statement by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon on Iran

Released February 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Office of Management and Budget Director Jacob J. "Jack" Lew and Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Austan D. Goolsbee on the Federal budget

Released February 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released February 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 188

Released February 18

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released February 22

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released February 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on the designation of Iranian officials responsible for or complicit in serious human rights abuses

Released February 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released February 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 514

Released February 27

Text: Statement by National Security Council Spokesman Thomas F. Vietor on Iran

Released February 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Susan E. Rice

Fact sheet: The Affordable Care Act: Supporting Innovation, Empowering States

Fact sheet: A Win for States and Taxpayers: President Obama's Plan To Cut Red Tape, Give States Flexibility, and Save Money

Released March 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Transcript of a conference call press briefing by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, White House Domestic Policy Council Director Melody C. Barnes, and Deputy Communications Director Jennifer R. Psaki

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Conference on Bullying Prevention Set for March 10

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Releases First Comprehensive Federal Report on the Status of American Women in Almost 50 Years

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the 2010 National Medal of Arts and National Humanities Medal recipients

Fact sheet: Women in America: People, Families and Income

Released March 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Chief Performance Officer and Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director for Management Jeffrey D. Zients

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.J. Res. 44

Released March 3

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Eugene B. Sperling and White House Communications Director H. Daniel Pfeiffer

Fact sheet: Enhancing U.S.-Mexico Cooperation

Announcement: President Obama To Honor Stanley Cup Champion Chicago Blackhawks at White House

Released March 4

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Discuss Shared Responsibility of Investing in Education To Win the Future in Boston Visit

Statement by the Press Secretary on Harvard University's decision to reestablish a Reserve Officer Training Corps presence on campus

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 662

Text: Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Austan D. Goolsbee on the Employment Situation in February

Text: Op-ed by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan for the Miami Herald: Fixing Struggling Schools

Fact sheet: Transformative Change in America's Lowest-Performing Schools

Announcement: White House Announces 2011 White House Easter Egg Roll Date and Theme

Released March 6

Advance text of remarks by Deputy National Security Adviser Denis R. McDonough at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society Center in Sterling, VA

Released March 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Highlights Shared Responsibility in Education Reform (embargoed until March 8)

Fact sheet: New Actions on Guantanamo and Detainee Policy

Released March 8

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released March 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on recent violence in the Abyei region of Sudan

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate action on Federal budget legislation

Released March 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon and Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes on Libya and the Middle East

Statement by the Press Secretary: President and First Lady Call For a United Effort To Address Bullying

Released March 12

Statement by the Press Secretary on Arab League announcements regarding the situation in Libya

Statement by the Press Secretary on the terrorist attack in the West Bank

Statement by National Security Council Spokesman Thomas F. Vietor on Cuba's detention of Alan Gross

Released March 13

Statement by the Press Secretary on the ongoing U.S. response to the earthquakes and tsunami in Japan

Statement by the Press Secretary on violence in Yemen and Bahrain

Text: Op-ed by President Obama for the Arizona Daily Star: We Must Seek Agreement on Gun Reforms

Released March 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman Gregory B. Jaczko, and Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel B. Poneman

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Calls on Congress To Fix No Child Left Behind Before the Start of the Next School Year (dated March 13)

Fact sheet: Fixing No Child Left Behind (dated March 13)

Released March 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs Michael B. Froman on the President's upcoming visit to Latin America

Statement by the Press Secretary on House of Representatives passage of legislation extending Federal Government funding

Fact sheet: The U.S.-Brazil Relationship: Strengthening Economic Ties Contribute to Jobs and Growth

Fact sheet: The U.S.-Brazil Relationship With Central and South America: An Emerging Partnership for Economic Growth

Released March 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs Daniel A. Restrepo, and Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes

Released March 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman Gregory B. Jaczko, and Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel B. Poneman

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate passage of legislation extending Federal Government funding

Released March 18

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Council of Economic Advisers release of its sixth quarterly report on the economic impact of the Recovery Act

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.J. Res. 48

Text: Op-ed by President Obama for USA Today: Jobs at Top of Latin America Agenda

Released March 19

Text: Defense Department fact sheet: U.S.-Brazil Defense Cooperation (dated March 14)

Text: Joint Statement by President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil and President Barack Obama: Brazil and the United States as Global Partners

Text: Memorandum of Understanding Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Cooperation To Support the Organization of Major Global Sporting Events

Text: State Department fact sheet: U.S.-Brazil Joint Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality

Text: Memorandum of Understanding Between the Department of Labor of the United States of America and the Ministry of Labor and Employment of Brazil Concerning Labor Cooperation

Text: Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil (dated March 18)

Text: Air Transport Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil

Text: Partnership for the Development of Aviation Biofuels

Fact sheet: Strengthening the U.S.-Brazil Economic Relationship

Fact sheet: U.S.-Brazil Strategic Energy Dialogue

Fact sheet: U.S.-Brazil Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Cooperation

Fact sheet: The United States and Brazil: Education, Science, Technology, Innovation, Space, and Education Cooperation

Released March 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon, and Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications

Benjamin J. Rhodes on the situation in Libya (dated March 20)

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes and Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs Daniel A. Restrepo previewing the President's visit to Chile

Statement by the Press Secretary: 2011 White House Easter Egg Roll Poster Design Contest

Text: Joint Statement by President Barack Obama and President Sebastian Pinera Echenique of Chile on the Occasion of President Obama's Visit to Santiago, Chile

Text: State Department fact sheet: The United States and Chile: Trade and Investment (dated March 20)

Text: State Department fact sheet: The United States and Chile: Cooperation on the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

Text: State Department fact sheet: The United States and Chile: Disaster Preparedness and Relief (dated March 20)

Text: State Department fact sheet: The United States and Chile: Trilateral Development Cooperation (dated March 20)

Text: State Department fact sheet: United States-Chile Cooperation on Education (dated March 20)

Text: State Department fact sheet: Pathways to Prosperity

Text: State Department fact sheet: The Merida Initiative: Expanding the U.S.-Mexico Partnership (dated March 3)

Text: State Department fact sheet: The Central America Regional Security Initiative: Citizen Safety—A Shared Partnership (dated March 14)

Text: State Department fact sheet: The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (dated March 14)

Text: State Department fact sheet: The Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI)

Text: State Department fact sheet: Western Hemispheric Affairs (WHA) FY 2010 Program List

Text: State Department fact sheet: NEXUS Innovation Initiative

Text: Defense Department fact sheet: U.S.-Chile Defense Cooperation (dated March 18)

Text: Defense Department fact sheet: U.S. Defense Cooperation in the Americas (dated March 15)

Text: Office of National Drug Control Policy fact sheet: U.S. Demand Reduction Efforts (dated February 2011)

Text: Memorandum of Intent Between the International Trade Administration, United States Department of Commerce and the Export Promotion Bureau (PROCHILE), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chile Concerning Technical and Promotional Cooperation in Support of Trade (dated March 18)

Text: Sister Park Arrangement Between Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, National Park Service, Department of the Interior of the United States of America and Francisco Coloane Marine and Coastal Protected Area, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Chile (dated March 18)

Text: Memorandum of Understanding Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Chile Concerning Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (dated March 18)

Text: Memorandum of Understanding Between the Federal Emergency Management Agency of the Department of Homeland Security of the United States of America and the National Emergency Office of the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security of the Republic of Chile (dated March 18)

Text: Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Chilean International Cooperation Agency (AGCI) for the Implementation of Development Cooperation Activities in Third Countries (dated February 23)

Text: Letter of Intent Between the Department of State of the Government of the United States of America and the Ministry of Education of the Government of the Republic of Chile (dated March 18)

Fact sheet: Strengthening the U.S.-Chile Economic Relationship

Fact sheet: The United States and Chile: Environment, Energy, and Climate Change

Fact sheet: Partnerships for Progress: Citizen Security in the Americas

Fact sheet: The Central America Citizen Security Partnership

Fact sheet: Partnerships for Progress: Education and Innovation

Fact sheet: Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas

Released March 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs Daniel A. Restrepo, and Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes (dated March 21)

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes

Statement by the Press Secretary on ending violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity

Text: State Department fact sheet: U.S.-El Salvador Citizen Security: A Shared Responsibility

Text: State Department fact sheet: The Central America Regional Security Initiative: Citizen Safety—A Shared Partnership (dated March 14)

Text: Defense Department fact sheet: U.S.-El Salvador Defense Cooperation

Fact sheet: Strengthening the U.S.-El Salvador Economic Relationship

Fact sheet: The Crossroads Fund: Reducing Transport and Logistics Costs

Fact sheet: Sending Money Abroad: Remittance Transfers

Released March 23

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes, and Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs Daniel A. Restrepo

Released March 24

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Syria

Statement by the Press Secretary on United Arab Emirates support for U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973

Text: Statement by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon on the adoption of a U.N. resolution appointing a Special Rapporteur to monitor human rights abuses in Iran

Released March 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Deliver Speech on Libya

Released March 28

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Deputy National Security Adviser Denis R. McDonough

Statement by the Press Secretary: 2011 White House Easter Egg Logo and Souvenir Egg Revealed

Fact sheet: Winning the Future: Out-Educating Our Global Competitors by Improving Educational Opportunities and Outcomes for Hispanic Students

Advance text of the President's remarks at the National Defense University

Released March 29

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Advance text of remarks by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon at the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference

Released March 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, and Deputy Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change Heather Zichal

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's decisions concerning the situation in Libya

Text: Statement by Deputy Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change Heather Zichal on the Obama administration's blueprint for a secure energy future

Fact sheet: America's Energy Security

Advance text of the President's remarks at Georgetown University

Released March 31

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on U.S. contribution to the U.N. Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 1079

Text: Statement by National Security Council Spokesman Thomas F. Vietor on "Strategy 31" protests in Russia

Fact sheet: National Clean Fleets Partnership (embargoed until April 1)

Released April 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Syria

Text: Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chair Austan D. Goolsbee on the employment situation in March

Advance text of the President's remarks at a UPS shipping facility in Landover, MD

Released April 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released April 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate passage of the "Comprehensive 1099 Taxpayer Protection and Repayment of Exchange Subsidy Overpayments Act of 2011"

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Republican Federal budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2012

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Yemen

Released April 6

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Senate votes on the Environmental Protection Agency's authority under the Clean Air Act

Fact sheet: U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement and Action Plan

Fact sheet: Benefits of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement: More American Exports, More American Jobs

Fact sheet: Leveling the Playing Field: Labor Protections and the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement

Fact sheet: Trade & the U.S.-Colombia Partnership

Fact sheet: U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement: Expanding Markets for America's Farmers and Ranchers

Released April 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director for Management Jeffrey D. Zients

Released April 8

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House, Department of Education Announce 2011 Race to the Top High School Commencement Challenge Finalists

Released April 9

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 1363

Released April 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released April 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama, Vice President Biden, First Lady Michelle Obama, and Dr. Jill Biden Launch National "Joining Forces" Initiative To Support America's Military Families

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Syria

Statement by the Press Secretary on the European Union's designation of Iranian officials responsible for human rights abuses in Iran

Released April 13

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Award Medals of Honor

Statement by the Press Secretary on the submission of legislation required for the ratification of four key treaties that are critical to securing nuclear materials and preventing nuclear terrorism

Fact sheet: The President's Framework for Shared Prosperity and Shared Fiscal Responsibility

Advance text of the President's remarks at George Washington University

Released April 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Office of Management and Budget Director Jacob J. "Jack" Lew

Statement by the Press Secretary on Federal budget funding for Fiscal Year 2011

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4

Text: Joint op-ed by President Obama, Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France for the International Herald Tribune, Le Figaro, and Times of London: Libya's Pathway to Peace

Released April 15

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: Administration Releases Strategy To Protect Online Consumers and Support Innovation

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Hold Town Halls To Discuss His Vision for Bringing Down Our Deficit Based on Shared Responsibility and Shared Prosperity

Statement by the Press Secretary on the House Republican budget vote

Fact sheet: National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace

Released April 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Announcement: President Obama and Vice President Biden's Tax Returns and Tax Receipts

Released April 19

Fact sheet: Benefits of the U.S.-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement (dated April 18)

Fact sheet: Tax Transparency in Panama (dated April 18)

Fact sheet: Labor Protections and the U.S.-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement (dated April 18)

Fact sheet: U.S.-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement: Expanding Markets for America's Farmers and Ranchers (dated April 18)

Announcement: White House Announces 2011 Easter Egg Roll Program and Talent Line-up

Released April 20

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on the death of photojournalist Tim Hetherington and the wounding of several other journalists in Libya

Statement by the Press Secretary on the death of photojournalist Chris Hondros in Libya

Statement by the Press Secretary on the passing of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1977

Released April 21

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: Online Review and Rating for Race to the Top High School Commencement Challenge Begins

Advance text of the President's opening remarks at a town hall meeting in Reno, NV

Released April 22

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Text: Statement by Attorney General Eric J. Holder, Jr.: Protecting Consumers at the Pump: The Oil and Gas Price Fraud Working Group

Released April 23

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Yemen

Released April 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Award Medal of Honor

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 307 and S.J. Res. 8

Released April 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Deliver 2011 Commencement Addresses

Released April 27

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, Director of Communications H. Daniel Pfeiffer, and White House Counsel Robert F. Bauer

Transcript of a background briefing by a senior administration official on national security personnel changes

Text: Statement by the Communications Director H. Daniel Pfeiffer: President Obama's Long-Form Birth Certificate

Released April 28

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Honors Outstanding Math and Science Teachers

Text: Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Austan D. Goolsbee on the advance estimate of GDP for the first quarter of 2011

Released April 29

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama, Dr. Jill Biden To Honor Teachers of the Year

Statement by the Press Secretary on the wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton of the United Kingdom

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's signing of an Executive order imposing sanctions against Syrian officials and Iranian Government entities responsible for human rights abuses

Fact sheet: Executive Order, Syria Human Rights Abuses

Released May 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism John O. Brennan

Statement by the Press Secretary on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty

Released May 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released May 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released May 5

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released May 6

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Syria

Text: Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Austan D. Goolsbee on the employment situation in April

Released May 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released May 10

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: Booker T. Washington High School Wins Race to the Top Commencement Challenge

Text: Statement by Domestic Policy Council Director: The President's Blueprint for Building a 21st Century Immigration System

Text: Statement by Assistant to the President for Manufacturing Policy Ron A. Bloom: How Tough Love Averted Catastrophe & Led to 4,200 New American Jobs

Advance text of the President's remarks in El Paso, TX

Released May 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released May 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Proposes Extending Term for FBI Director Robert Mueller

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Honor UConn Men's Basketball Team at White House

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 1308

Fact sheet: The Administration's Cybersecurity Accomplishments

Fact sheet: Cybersecurity Legislative Proposal

Released May 13

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Deliver Commencement Address to Booker T. Washington High School Graduates in Memphis

Statement by the Press Secretary on the 50th anniversary of the opening of the White House Situation Room

Text: Letter of resignation from U.S. Special Envoy for Middle East Peace George J. Mitchell (dated April 6)

Text: Remarks as prepared for delivery by National Security Adviser Thomas E. Donilon at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (dated May 12)

Released May 16

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Releases *The Small Business Agenda: Growing America's Small Businesses To Win the Future* Highlighting Critical Support for Small Businesses Across the Country

Statement by the Press Secretary: The President & Vice President's 2010 Financial Disclosure Forms

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Launches 2011 Citizens Medal Nomination Process

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Give Keynote Address During Coast Guard Academy Commencement Exercises

Advance text of the President's remarks at a commencement address at Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis, TN

Fact sheet: The Small Business Agenda: Growing America's Small Businesses To Win the Future

Released May 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on S. 940, the "Close Big Oil Tax Loopholes Act"

Released May 18

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by senior administration officials to preview the economic components of the President's remarks at the Department of State

Fact sheet: Economic Support for the Middle East and North Africa

Released May 19

Fact sheet: "A Moment of Opportunity" in the Middle East and North Africa

Advance text of the President's remarks at the Department of State

Released May 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes, Senior Director for European Affairs Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, and Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs Michael B. Froman on the President's visit to Europe

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Pardons

Released May 21

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Sudan

Released May 22

Advance text of the President's remarks at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee Policy Conference

Released May 23

Statement by the Press Secretary on the European Union's designation of Iranian individuals and entities associated with nuclear proliferation-related activities in Iran

Released May 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes

Text: Joint op-ed by President Obama and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom for the Times of London: Not Just Special, But an Essential Relationship

Released May 25

Fact sheet: The U.S.-UK Partnership for Global Development

Fact sheet: The U.S.-UK Joint Strategy Board

Fact sheet: The U.S.-UK Task Force To Support Our Armed Forces Personnel, Veterans and Their Families

Fact sheet: U.S.-UK Higher Education, Science, and Innovation Collaboration

Fact sheet: U.S. and UK Cooperation on Cyberspace

Fact sheet: Peace Corps and VSO Partnership on Volunteerism To Promote Global Development

Released May 26

Transcript of a readout by National Security Council Senior Director for Asian Affairs Daniel R. Russel on the President's meeting with Prime Minister Naoto Kan of Japan at the G–8 summit in Deauville, France

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 990

Text: Joint Report by the Coordinators on Progress of the U.S.-Russia Presidential Commission

Text: Memorandum of Understanding on the Smart Grid Partnership Program (dated May 24)

Text: Protocol of Intent on Cooperation for the Global Eradication of Polio (dated January 27)

Text: Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Basic Biomedical Research between the National Institutes of Health and Russian Academy of Sciences (dated April 26)

Text: Memorandum of Understanding Between the National Institutes of Health and the Russian Foundation for Basic Research of the Russian Federation (dated March 10)

Released May 27

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes and National Security Council Senior Director for European Affairs Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall

Transcript of a readout by a senior administration official on the President's G–8 Summit meetings in Deauville, France

Text: Deauville G8 Declaration: Renewed Commitment for Freedom and Democracy

Text: Declaration of the G8 on the Arab Spring

Text: G8/Africa Joint Declaration: Shared Values, Shared Responsibilities

Fact sheet: G–8 Summit in Deauville, France

Fact sheet: G–8 and the Middle East and North Africa

Transcript of a weekly address by Vice President Joe Biden (embargoed until May 28)

Released May 28

Fact sheet: U.S.-Poland Bilateral Defense Cooperation

Fact sheet: The United States and Poland—An Alliance and Partnership for the 21st Century

Fact sheet: U.S.-Poland Cooperation on Clean Energy

Fact sheet: U.S.-Poland Business Roundtable

Fact sheet: U.S.-Polish Efforts To Advance Democracy Worldwide

Released May 29

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released May 31

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 793 and H.R. 1893

Text: Statement by White House Office of Public Engagement Associate Director Stephanie Valencia: People are Talking and People Want Immigration Reform

Released June 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney and Assistant to the President for Manufacturing Policy Ron A. Bloom

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 1082

Released June 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released June 3

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: On 30th Year of HIV/AIDS, Obama Administration Recommits to Fighting Pandemic

Statement by the Press Secretary on violence in Yemen

Text: Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chair Austan D. Goolsbee on the employment situation in May

Released June 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: Dr. Austan D. Goolsbee, Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, To Return to the University of Chicago

Released June 7

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama and *Skills for America's Future* Partners Announce Initiatives Critical to Improving Manufacturing Workforce (embargoed until June 8)

Statement by the Press Secretary on U.S. support for a second term candidacy for United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

Fact sheet: U.S.-Germany Cultural relations

Fact sheet: U.S.-German Global Economic and Development Cooperation

Fact sheet: U.S.-Germany Security Cooperation

Fact sheet: The United States and Germany—Leaders for the 21st Century

Fact sheet: U.S.-Germany Science and Technology Cooperation

Fact sheet: U.S.-German Bilateral Economic Ties

Released June 8

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 754

Released June 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: Obama Administration Establishes White House Council To Strengthen Rural Communities

Statement by the Press Secretary on the IAEA Board of Governors resolution on Syria

Released June 10

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Southern Kordofan, Sudan

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Syria

Released June 11

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Syria

Text: Statement by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism John O. Brennan on the death of Al Qaida terrorist organization operative Harun Fazul

Released June 13

Transcripts of press gaggles by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released June 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released June 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Text: Statement by Counsel to the President Robert F. Bauer on the availability of executive branch personnel public financial disclosure reports

Released June 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released June 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Text: Obama Administration Announces Commitment to Promoting Inbound Foreign Direct Investment To Create Jobs in the U.S. and Grow the Economy

Announcement: President Obama To Honor Major League Soccer Cup Champion Colorado Rapids at the White House on June 27

Released June 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, and Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Margaret A. Hamburg

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President will address the Nation on the drawdown of U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan on June 22

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama To Discuss Manufacturing at Carnegie Mellon University

Released June 22

Transcript of a teleconference background briefing by senior administration officials previewing the President's plan to draw down U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan

Statement by the Press Secretary: On Anniversary of *Olmstead*, Obama Administration Recommits To Assist Americans With Disabilities

Announcement: President Obama To Honor WNBA Champion Seattle Storm at the White House on June 29

Advance text of the President's address to the Nation on the drawdown of U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan

Released June 23

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Launches Advanced Manufacturing Partnership (embargoed until June 24)

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Nuclear Suppliers Group approval of new guidelines covering transfers of sensitive nuclear technologies used for enrichment of uranium or the processing of spent nuclear fuel

Released June 24

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's June 27 meetings with Senate leadership to discuss approaches to deficit reduction

Statement by the Press Secretary on the fifth anniversary of the capture and detainment of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit by Hamas militants

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S.J. Res. 7 and S.J. Res. 9

Released June 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Released June 28

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary on progress on Trade Adjustment Assistance for American workers and pending free trade agreements in support of American jobs

Fact sheet: Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers: Restoring and Reauthorizing Trade Adjustment Assistance

Fact sheet: The U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement: More American Jobs, Faster Economic Recovery Through Exports

Fact sheet: Benefits of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement

Fact sheet: Benefits of the U.S.-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement

Released June 29

Fact sheet: National Strategy for Counterterrorism

Advance text of remarks by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism John O. Brennan at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies

Released June 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney

Statement by the Press Secretary: Obama Administration Announces 14 Initial Partners in the Better Buildings Challenge

Appendix D—Presidential Documents Published in the *Federal Register*

This appendix lists Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the Federal Register. *The texts of the documents are printed in the* Federal Register *(*F.R.*) at the citations listed below. The documents are also printed in title 3 of the* Code of Federal Regulations *and in the Compilation of Presidential Documents.*

PROCLAMATIONS

Proc. No.	*Date 2010*	*Subject*	*76 F.R. Page*
8622	Jan. 9	Honoring the Victims of the Tragedy in Tucson, Arizona	2241
8623	Jan. 14	Religious Freedom Day, 2011	3817
8624	Jan. 14	Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2011	3819
8625	Jan. 31	American Heart Month, 2011	6305
8626	Jan. 31	National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, 2011	6307
8627	Feb. 1	National African American History Month, 2011	6521
8628	Feb. 28	American Red Cross Month, 2011	11927
8629	Feb. 28	Irish-American Heritage Month, 2011	11929
8630	Feb. 28	Women's History Month, 2011	11931
8631	Feb. 28	50th Anniversary of the Peace Corps	11933
8632	Feb. 28	Death of Army Corporal Frank W. Buckles, the Last Surviving American Veteran of World War I	11935
8633	Mar. 1	Read Across America Day, 2011	12265
8634	Mar. 4	National Consumer Protection Week, 2011	12817
8635	Mar. 4	Save Your Vision Week, 2011	12819
8636	Mar. 4	150th Anniversary of the Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln	12821
8637	Mar. 16	150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy, 2011	15209
8638	Mar. 18	National Poison Prevention Week, 2011	16523
8639	Mar. 24	100th Anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire	17327
8640	Mar. 24	Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy, 2011	17329
8641	Mar. 30	Cesar Chavez Day, 2011	18629
8642	Mar. 31	National Donate Life Month, 2011	18631
8643	Mar. 31	National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, 2011	18633
8644	Mar. 31	National Cancer Control Month, 2011	19259
8645	Mar. 31	National Child Abuse Prevention Month, 2011	19261
8646	Mar. 31	National Financial Literacy Month, 2011	19263
8647	Apr. 1	World Autism Awareness Day, 2011	19265
8648	Apr. 6	National D.A.R.E. Day, 2011	19899
8649	Apr. 7	National Volunteer Week, 2011	20215

PROCLAMATIONS (Continued)

Proc. No.	Date 2010	Subject	76 F.R. Page
8650	Apr. 8	National Crime Victims' Rights Week, 2011	20829
8651	Apr. 8	Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 2011	20831
8652	Apr. 8	National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, 2011	20833
8653	Apr. 11	National Equal Pay Day, 2011	21221
8654	Apr. 12	Civil War Sesquicentennial	21223
8655	Apr. 14	Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 2011	21999
8656	Apr. 15	National Park Week, 2011	22001
8657	Apr. 22	Earth Day, 2011	23685
8658	Apr. 27	Workers Memorial Day, 2011	24785
8659	Apr. 29	Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, 2011	25515
8660	Apr. 29	Jewish American Heritage Month, 2011	25517
8661	Apr. 29	National Foster Care Month, 2011	25519
8662	Apr. 29	National Physical Fitness and Sports Month	25521
8663	Apr. 29	Older Americans Month, 2011	25523
8664	Apr. 29	National Charter Schools Week, 2011	25525
8665	Apr. 29	Law Day, U.S.A., 2011	25527
8666	Apr. 29	Loyalty Day, 2011	25529
8667	Apr. 29	National Day of Prayer, 2011	25531
8668	May 3	50th Anniversary of the Freedom Rides	26925
8669	May 5	Military Spouse Appreciation Day, 2011	27217
8670	May 6	National Women's Health Week, 2011	27599
8671	May 6	Mother's Day, 2011	27601
8672	May 12	National Building Safety Month, 2011	27843
8673	May 12	Small Business Week, 2011	28623
8674	May 13	Emergency Medical Services Week, 2011	29133
8675	May 13	National Defense Transportation Day and National Transportation Week, 2011	29135
8676	May 13	Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, 2011	29137
8677	May 13	World Trade Week, 2011	29139
8678	May 18	National Maritime Day, 2011	29989
8679	May 20	National Hurricane Preparedness Week, 2011	30493
8680	May 20	National Safe Boating Week, 2011	30495
8681	May 20	Armed Forces Day, 2011	30497
8682	May 23	To Modify the Rules of Origin for the United States-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, and for Other Purposes	30499
8683	May 27	Prayer for Peace, Memorial Day, 2011	32065
8684	May 31	African-American Music Appreciation Month, 2011	32851
8685	May 31	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month, 2011	32853
8686	May 31	National Caribbean-American Heritage Month, 2011	32855
8687	May 31	Great Outdoors Month, 2011	32857

PROCLAMATIONS (Continued)

Proc. No.	*Date 2010*	*Subject*	*76 F.R. Page*
8688	June 2	National Oceans Month, 2011	33119
8689	June 10	Flag Day and National Flag Week, 2011	35089
8690	June 17	Father's Day, 2011	36855

EXECUTIVE ORDERS

E.O. No.	*Date 2009*	*Subject*	*76 F.R. Page*
13563	Jan. 18	Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review	3821
13564	Jan. 31	Establishment of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness	6309
13565	Feb. 8	Establishment of the Intellectual Property Enforcement Advisory Committees	7681
13566	Feb. 25	Blocking Property and Prohibiting Certain Transactions Related to Libya	11315
13567	Mar. 7	Periodic Review of Individuals Detained at Guantánamo Bay Naval Station Pursuant to the Authorization for Use of Military Force	13277
13568	Mar. 8	Extending Provisions of the International Organizations Immunities Act to the Office of the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the International Civilian Office in Kosovo	13497
13569	Apr. 5	Amendments to Executive Orders 12824, 12835, 12859, and 13532, Reestablishment Pursuant to Executive Order 13498, and Revocation of Executive Order 13507	19891
13570	Apr. 18	Prohibiting Certain Transactions With Respect to North Korea	22291
13571	Apr. 27	Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service	24339
13572	Apr. 29	Blocking Property of Certain Persons With Respect to Human Rights Abuses in Syria	24787
13573	May 18	Blocking Property of Senior Officials of the Government of Syria	29143
13574	May 23	Authorizing the Implementation of Certain Sanctions Set Forth in the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, as Amended	30505
13575	June 9	Established of the White House Rural Council	34841

EXECUTIVE ORDERS (Continued)

E.O. No.	*Date 2009*	*Subject*	*76 F.R. Page*
13576	June 13	Delivering an Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government	35297
13577	June 15	Establishment of the SelectUSA Initiative	35715

OTHER PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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	Jan. 6	Memorandum: Disestablishment of United States Joint Forces Command	1977
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